

A N
E N Q U I R Y

INTO THE
SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE

Concerning the DURATION of
Future Punishment:

IN WHICH

The TEXTS of the *New Testament*, relating
to this Subject, are considered; and the
DOCTRINE, drawn from them alone, is
shewn to be consistent with REASON.

Occasion'd by some late WRITINGS,
And particularly Mr. WHISTON's Discourse of
Hell-Torments.

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Bishop of LICHFIELD and COVENTRY.

*Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord, we persuade
Men. 2 COR. v. 11.
For our God is a Consuming Fire. HEB. xii. 29.*

L O N D O N:

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M. DCC. XLIV.

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

DOCTRINE

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

THERE will be so much occasion for the Reader's Candour throughout the following Performance, that it would be imprudent to offend him, by omitting any usual Instance of Civility. It is however of little Consequence to the Publick, to be told how I came to be engaged in this Dispute; only it may be said, that this Enquiry should either have been published sooner, or not at all: Sooner, that it might have obviated the ill Effects of Mr. *Whiston's* Book; or not at all now, since he has been answered by others, and particularly by Mr. *Dodwell*, in two excel-

lent Discourses before the University of
Oxford.

I LOVE no Disguise in any Case, in this I need none; The plain Truth is this:—Mr. *Whiston's* Book had been published a considerable time before I was desired to write against it; when I had undertaken this Task, I finished it as soon as I was able, and as fast as other Business and Avocations would give me leave. And tho' this Treatise comes late, yet if I have in any measure compass'd my Design, and confirmed the Point I defend, I flatter myself that it may still be useful. While Opinions are confined to Books, they are of little Consequence to the World in general; and it is to little purpose to raise or continue Disputes about them. But the Doctrine here opposed is of another kind. It is so agreeable to the Wishes and Inclinations of some People, that they are ready to believe it, not only independently of
Mr.

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Mr. *Whiston's* Book, but perhaps without any Reasoning, or Reading, upon the Subject at all. It is enough for them to hear, that a learned Man has writ something, against the Eternity of Hell-Torments. The rest they take for granted ; they question not but it must be so as he says ; for the Doctrine of a miserable Eternity always seemed to them absurd and incredible.

T H E R E is little hope of prevailing upon such Persons as these, to read any Thing on the other side. But then they may hear, as they did in the other Case, that the Point is far from being so clear and certain, as they seem to imagine ; — that it still appears to be the Doctrine of the New Testament, that there will be no Alteration of the State of wicked Men after the Day of Judgment ; — that Annihilation is a Dream, and the *Hypothesis* of a Re-establishment more visionary and extravagant

gant than *that*; — that therefore they should not so hastily take for granted, what has never yet been proved; nor talk and act as if Hell-Torments were not perpetual, till they are very sure that they are in the Right. In a word, if the following Enquiry can contribute to make Men a little more cautious upon this Article, and to reflect on what they are doing before it be too late, it will do good service to the World; and then the Affair of its appearing so long after the Book that *occasion'd* it, will be merely an Incident not worth regarding.

As to the other Question, — What need of *this* after Mr. *Dodwell's* Discourses? I answer, that it was finished before his Discourses were publish'd; and as it likewise takes in a larger Compass than the Nature of that Gentleman's Design would admit of, it was judged proper not to suppress it. I mention
this,

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this, lest I should be suspected of Vanity, as if I thought myself capable of improving an Argument, which had been handled by so good a Writer: An Imagination of all others the farthest from my Thoughts.

As to the Work itself, I can only say this, that however imperfect the Performance may be, I have taken the right Method to find out the Truth. I have endeavoured to collect the Doctrine of the New Testament, I think from *all* the Texts in it relating to the Argument I am upon; and I have attempted to clear this Doctrine from the Difficulties objected to it, in point of Reason: With what Success, the Publick only must judge. But surely if our Doctrine must be rejected, it will not be in Consequence of what Mr. *Whiston* has said against it. There is little Reasoning in that Gentleman's Book;—some Scripture explain'd as he pleases, and
some-

sometimes inconsistently enough ; —a good deal of Conjecture and Invention ; —and a numerous Collection of Testimonies from ancient Writers, tho' of different Value, in which his Strength principally lies. But any one may see that this Strength is Weakness, depending chiefly, or only, on his own arbitrary Construction *. Let him translate as he pleases, and he can prove what he will; but deny him this Privilege, and hardly the Shadow of a Proof remains. It puts one in mind of the Army mention'd by his favourite *Esdras*, Ch. xiii. *There was gather'd together a great Multitude of Men, out of number :—*But no sooner should

* Thus, for instance, rather than give the plain and full Sense of his Authors, he will translate them into something little less than Contradiction. Page 65, we find *Polycarp* speaking of that Fire which is *lasting, and never* (μὴδέποτε) *to be quenched*. Why then is not αἰώνιον render'd *Everlasting*? So again, p. 70, he makes the Author of the *Recognitions* talk of *the Punishments of lasting Fire* (N. B.) *without End*.

should these Men ingage, than *upon a sudden, of an innumerable Multitude nothing was to be perceived, but only Dust and Smoak.*

HOWEVER, as Mr. *Whiston* had endeavoured to support his Cause by Authorities, I thought it not proper to leave mine wholly destitute of the same Advantage. For this Reason I willingly quoted such Passages as I met with, either in ancient, or modern Writers of Note and Eminency, that were serviceable to my Purpose. But it is needless perhaps to make any Apology for these Quotations: They are possibly the only Part of the Performance, which does not want one. Be it as it will, it must at last be left to the Indulgence of the Reader. A candid one will excuse any small Defects, or Mistakes; and as to the rest, it is to no purpose to intreat their Favour.

THIS is all I think necessary to be said by way of Preface, since I have more fully opened and explained my Design and Method in the Introduction.

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THE INTRODUCTION.

THE several Treatises which have, within these late Years, been published, against the Doctrine of the *Eternity* of future Punishments; and the too great Success which, it may be fear'd, they have met with, in a licentious and unbelieving Age; may have rendered it perhaps but too necessary to examine this Subject once more, and to try, whether it cannot be reasonably and fairly defended. It has long appeared in the World as a Doctrine of the Gospel, and been received under that Character; which tho' indeed it be no Proof, that it really is so, is yet an Argument, that it should not rashly be rejected. It ought, at least, to be set in a proper light, have its proper Evidence produced for it, and have at last a fair and impartial Hearing. When this is done, it must take its Chance: The Cause will then be determined, not by general Exclamations, not by hard Names, and abusive Invectives, not by Appeals to the Pity and Passions of Men, not by spurious Authorities (none
B of

2. *The* INTRODUCTION.

of which are of any Weight at all in the Case); but by, what alone ought to determine it, true genuine Scripture, and right Reason.

THAT this Doctrine may be maintained upon this Footing, I am fully persuaded; but whether I am able to maintain it, is a Point, which I have Reason to be much less sure of. However, it is but reasonable, that every one should distinguish between the Cause itself, and the Defence of it. No Part of true Religion is naturally connected with any Man's Way of supporting it; but is certainly, in itself, capable of a rational Vindication, whether his Attempts to vindicate it succeed or fail: And I desire Religion may have the Benefit of this Observation, against any Injury I myself may do it.

MY Design in these Papers is not to confine my Thoughts and Method to *that* of any one particular Writer; but as the Gentlemen, who have distinguished themselves on the *negative* Side of this Question, proceed upon different Principles, and advance Arguments and *Hypotheses* not very consistent with one another, I shall take a wider Compass, than perhaps is necessary to answer any one of them, and treat of the Subject in such a manner, that none of their Sentiments may appear to be wholly neglected. However, as Mr. *Whiston* is the latest Writer upon this Subject; as he complains, that some others before him did not go to *the Bottom* * of it;

* Page 2, 136.

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it; and may therefore be supposed to imagine, that he himself has done it; and likewise as his Performance was the immediate Occasion of mine; a more particular Regard will be paid to *him* in the Course of these Observations. Now, this Gentleman tells us, that there is not *so much as one plain Testimony* *, either in the Old or New Testament, for this Doctrine of eternal Torments; that they are “*intirely unjust in their own Nature; extremely cruel and barbarous, both in the Threatening, and in the Execution*; and what any one, that believes and considers the exact Justice, and infinite Goodness of God, cannot possibly believe at the same time †.—If the common Doctrine, he says, were certainly true, *the Justice of God must inevitably be given up, and much more his Mercy*; for this Doctrine *supposes him to delight in Cruelty and Barbarity, the most savage Cruelty and Barbarity possible ‡*; that these Punishments answer no good End, but are only *Instances of the absolute and supreme Power and Dominion of the cruel and inexorable Author of their Being ||*”; and that “*this amazing, this most pernicious, this horrid Doctrine*, is unjustly fathered upon our holy Religion **.”

MANY more Passages to this Purpose might be collected out of Mr. *Whiston's* Book; but I take no Delight in such Work, and have

B 2

repeated

* Page 19.

† P. 136.

‡ P. 137. || P. 19.

** P. 137.

2 The INTRODUCTION.

repeated these with no other View, than as they may contribute to open my Design, and serve to introduce what I have to offer upon the Subject. Only, before I proceed farther, it may be proper to take notice, that I have nothing to do with the Doctrine as Mr. *Whiston* has represented it, and as he seems to think it is *commonly* held and believed. I contend for no Doctrine, that *supposes* God to delight in Cruelty;—for no Punishments, that are *Instances only of absolute and supreme Power and Dominion*. All such Doctrines as these Mr. *Whiston* may confute as long as he pleases; he will have no Adversary in me. I likewise agree with him, that a Distinction should be made between the Heathen, and those that never heard of the Gospel; and Christians, or those to whom that Gospel has been preached*. To these latter, with my Consent, let the Controversy be confined: They are, for certain, the Persons properly concerned in a Dispute about the Punishments contained in the Gospel. But then, on the other hand, the Gospel is the only proper Authority to determine this Question. Testimonies from *apocryphal* or spurious Writers will signify little. And as the Old Testament has nothing so clear and express upon this Subject as the *New*, and contains nothing *contrary* to the New Testament, it will be sufficient to examine, how this Matter is decided there.

ACCORDINGLY,

The INTRODUCTION. 5

ACCORDINGLY, I shall consider *all the Texts* of the New Testament relating to this Subject, and collect the Doctrine from them alone. I shall then endeavour to clear *this Scripture-Doctrine* from all Imputations of Injustice and Cruelty, to reconcile it with the moral Perfections of God, and shew, that it is so far from being what no one can possibly believe, that, upon the joint Evidence of Nature, Philosophy, and Revelation, it is perfectly *credible*. And, if there be any particular Objections, that will not fall under these Articles, they also shall be distinctly considered. Thus far I shall be chiefly upon the *Defensive*; but I shall not content myself merely with *that*. As the Adversaries have advanced different Schemes of their own, some being for the *Hypothesis* of Annihilation, and others for the System, as they call it, of a Restoration; I shall take these Schemes into Consideration, and shew, that they are attended with Difficulties not easy to be removed: So that if, after all, I should not be able to clear the Doctrine I defend from all Difficulties whatever, yet there would be no Sense in rejecting it for the Sake of other *Hypotheses*, not clear from equal Difficulties themselves, and supported by much less (perhaps by no) Evidence of Scripture. Lastly, as Mr. *Whiston* seems to intimate, that this Eternity of future Punishments is so far from being a fundamental Doctrine of Christianity, that it is rather a Point of small Consequence *;

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and

* P. 102, 103.

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and likewise, that *his* Doctrine is as likely to move and influence Men, as *this* *; and something to the same Purpose has been suggested by another Writer, in favour of his System of a Restoration—I must therefore examine this *Pretence*, and shew the *Use* and *Importance* of the Doctrine I defend.

EVERY one will see, that I have drawn out for myself the Plan of a Work, which will be of some Length; and which therefore, for the Sake both of Ease and Method, must be divided into several Chapters.

* P. 141.

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AN
INQUIRY
 INTO THE
SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE
 OF
Future Punishment.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Testimonies of the four Gospels, relating to this Subject, are considered.

Nº I.

MATT. iii. 10, 12. *And now also the Axe is laid unto the Root of the Trees: Therefore every Tree, which bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire.*

Nº II.

Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and gather his Wheat into the Garner; but will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.

I cite these Passages together, because, under different Similitudes, they seem to establish the same Truth, and explain and illustrate each other. They are a Key, as it were, which opens to us the Nature and Design of, Christ's Kingdom. In *this*, it seems, there will be made, some time or other, a *total* and *final* Separation between the Good and the Evil; and the Texts both *suppose*, that there will be Men, whose moral State will answer to the *Tree which bringeth not forth good Fruit*, and to the *Chaff*, who, like them, therefore, are to be *rejected*, and *whose End is to be burned*. Upon the Evidence arising from these Texts, there is no more Hope of the *Restoration* of this kind of Men, than of the Restoration of the *Tree, which is hewn down, and cast into the Fire*; or of the Conversion of *Chaff* into *Wheat*. They conclude therefore plainly against the System of a *Restoration*. But then, as to *Annihilation*, they are so far from opposing *that*, that, if we will believe Mr. *Whiston*, they are strongly for it. The Words in the latter Text "compare the
 " Wicked to *Chaff*, which is not laid up in
 " Garners, as Wheat is for its Preservation, but
 " intirely *burnt up* for its Destruction: Which
 " is strong against those, that suppose the
 " Wicked to have their Lives preserved, on
 " purpose that they may be subject to never-
 " ending Pains; and plainly implies, that their
 " Punishment shall end much sooner, by an
 " utter Destruction, or what we should call
 " Annihilation *." If, in Answer to this, any
 Strals

* P. 42. See also p. 34.

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Stress should be laid upon the Word *unquenchable*, Mr. *Whiston* perhaps would reply, that *that* only means this Fire shall never be *quenched* till the Wicked are utterly destroyed*: Or, the Fire itself may continue longer than the Torments of particular Offenders, and be the common Place of Torment for Sinners in different Ages and Periods of the World, one after another †.

As to the first Supposition, that by *unquenchable Fire* is only meant, that no one shall *quench* this Fire *before* the Wicked are utterly consumed; it does not come up to the first, most obvious, and natural Idea of the Word: For, as far as the Force of the Word is concerned, I can make neither more nor less of *unquenchable Fire*, than Fire that *never* can (or *never* shall) be *quenched*. Besides, it takes for granted the chief Thing to be proved, that the Wicked will be utterly destroyed, or annihilated. The same may be said of his other Supposition, which is only a private, and (as far as appears) a groundless Conjecture. There is no Intimation in Scripture, that this *unquenchable Fire* shall be the common Place of Torments for Sinners *successively*, or last longer than they do. In short, both these are only Expedients which prove nothing, but, supposing Mr. *Whiston's Hypothesis* to be true, would reconcile this Expression with it. But then, he may still insist upon the Comparison of the Wicked to *Chaff*, which

* See p. 24.

† P. 49.

which is *intirely burnt up*. It would perhaps be too great a Nicety to observe, that neither *Wood* nor *Chaff* are so consumed in the Fire as to be annihilated ; nor are there any Instances or Examples of *Annihilation* in Nature, which, by-the-by, should make a Philosopher less fond of it, than Mr. *Whiston* seems to be, whose *horrid* Doctrine * would annihilate, not only the Wicked, but God's whole Creation. However, whatever becomes of the *Wood* and the *Chaff*, Comparisons and Allusions of this kind are not to be interpreted with Rigour, nor extended farther than they were designed to hold. Upon the Principles of all true Philosophy, the Souls of Men are (under God) naturally immortal. They are not therefore, as Mr. *Whiston* supposes, *preserved on purpose that they may be subject to never-ending Pains* ; but their very Nature, different from *that* of Wood or Chaff, subjects them to the Pains, which their Wickedness deserved, *for ever*. 'Tis true indeed, Mr. *W.* has quite another Notion of the *Immortality* of the Soul, which, according to him, signifies no more than its surviving the Body at Death †. But this Point must not be debated with him here, and may be safely trusted to the Proof, which has been given of it in the unanswerable Writings of Dr. *Clarke*, Mr. *Norris*, &c. and, since them, by the excellent Author of the *Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*.

To

* See p. 23, 64, 75, 89, 134.

† P. 72.

To return to my Texts above : What I directly infer from them, is only this, and it appears to me too plain to be denied, that there will be some time, when Christ has *thoroughly purged his Floor, a total and final Separation* made between the Good and the Evil. What will become of this rejected Part of Mankind, after this Separation, we need not determine yet. As we travel on, our Light perhaps will grow clearer. See Dr. Clarke's Sermon on this Text, Vol. VIII. p. 111.

N^o III.

Matt. v. 22. *Whosoever shall say, (to his Brother) Thou Fool, shall be in Danger of Hell-fire.*

THIS Text, as Mr. *Whiston* observes, no-way concerns the *Duration* of Hell-Torments ; but is set down by him, in order to acquaint us with a *Distinction in antient Language* between *Hades* and *Gebenna* *. We thank him for his Information ; but had heard of some such thing before : Nor is any one now so ignorant as to believe, that, by the Article of Christ's *Descent* into Hell, or *Hades*, is meant his descending into *Hell-fire* itself. I am sure the best Expositors of the *Creed* teach us quite other Doctrine. But then, Mr. *Whiston* would make a sort of *Purgatory* of this *Hades* : " Accordingly, says he, I have all along added a few Passages relating

12 *The Scripture-Doctrine*

“ lating to the *castigatory* and *temporary Punishments of Hades* *.” And so indeed he has; to obviate which, I refer, at present, (for this Point will be more largely considered hereafter) to Bishop Bull’s Discourse concerning the *middle State of Happiness or Misery* between Death and the Resurrection †. Now, I do affirm, says that learned Writer, *the consentient and constant Doctrine of the Primitive Church to be this, That the Souls of all the Faithful, immediately after Death, enter into a Place and State of Bliss, far exceeding all the Felicities of this World, tho’ short of that most consummate perfect Beatitude of the Kingdom of Heaven, with which they are to be crowned and rewarded in the Resurrection: And so, on the contrary, that the Souls of all the Wicked are, presently after Death, in a State of very great Misery, and yet dreading a far greater Misery at the Day of Judgment.* Mr. Whiston, not content with these two Sorts of Men, has three or four Sorts, whom he disposes of accordingly. There are, on the one hand, the few *Elect*, or Chosen of God, p. 114. the same, I suppose, with *the more perfectly and completely good*, p. 112. On the other hand are *the hardened and incorrigibly wicked*. These are not at all admitted to *Repentance and Pardon in Hades*, and therefore are not exercised with any of those *castigatory Punishments*, which would avail nothing in their *remediless Condition*. With regard to the *first* Sort of Men, these Punishments are not needful;

* P. 35.

† Vol. I. Sermon. 3. *English Works*.

ful; and on the *latter* they would do no good. But then between these are the *smaller Offenders*, and the *imperfectly good Christians* *; and these, believe me, are to smart for it. For the *Fire or Flame of Gehenna extends into such Parts of Hades as wicked Men, who are not incurably so, are forced into, long before the Day of Judgment* †. And this preliminary Eruption of that Fire or Flame is only intended as a Punishment necessary for the Repentance and Recovery of lesser Offenders, that they may never be actually cast into Gehenna. Upon this account it is said in the Text, that the Man who calls his Brother Fool, shall (not now be cast into Gehenna, but only shall) be liable to some Part of its Torments. This, as I apprehend, is Mr. Whiston's Scheme; and either he, or his Authors, Esdras, Hermas, &c. may have the Honour of inventing it; for I cannot find it in the genuine Scriptures.

THE Scripture supposes but two Sorts of Men, viz. those who die with Faith and Repentance, and those who do not. The former, according to the Terms of the Gospel, are intitled to the Pardon of God: And there is no Intimation, that God designs to punish his Creatures after he has pardoned them. His Pardon is *free Pardon*. They are not to satisfy for their own Sins; they are not to merit their own Salvation. All this is done to their Hands. And if they die with Repentance towards God,

and

* P. 112.

† P. 115.

and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, they are as certainly saved as the Gospel is true. What Improvements they may be capable of in *Hades*, or this intermediate State; and to what Degrees of Perfection they may there arrive, above what they could attain in this World; is a Point I shall not determine. But, according to the *Mercies*, and the *Covenant*, of God in Christ Jesus, all Punishments I disclaim *. Then, as to the other Sort of Men, who die without Faith and Repentance; those I reckon to be the same with Mr. *Whiston's* *hardened and incorrigibly wicked Christians*, who are not at all admitted to Repentance and Pardon in *Hades*: Which I take to be a Concession so far in my favour, as it supposes, that there may be some Men incurably and incorrigibly wicked †.

WHAT Mr. *W.* says, that this Imputation (*viz. Thou Fool*) must be said in Opposition to known Truth; or must be an *unjust* Imputation; and, in the *second* place, it must not have been repented of ‡; will be admitted, I suppose, without

* *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.* 1 John i. 9. *And the Blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin.* Ver. 7. Not the Fire either of Purgatory, or Hell. Certè remissio peccatorum non definitur tormentis flammarum & suppliciorum satisfactionibus. Neque enim sensus est, quando Scriptura dicit, Christum meruisse nobis remissionem peccatorum, quod promeruit nobis tormenta flammarum, & acerbissima supplicia, quibus nobis ipsis pro peccatis satisfaciendum sit; sed ex misericordia Dei propter satisfactionem Christi, Scriptura tradit peccata remitti, hoc est, gratuito condonari & tegi, ne imputentur & exquirantur. *Chemnicii Examen Conc. Trid.* Pars 3. p. 120.

† P. 112.

‡ P. 115.

without the Authority of the *Apostolical Canons*.
Utitur, in re non dubia, testibus non necessariis.

Nº IV.

Matt. v. 25, 26. *Agree with thine Adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the Way with him: lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing.*

UPON these Words Mr. *W.* thus comments * :
 “ If by the Adversary here be meant the *Devil*,
 “ and the Text relates to the Prison of *Gebenna*,
 “ or *Hell*, and not to that of *Hades*, as it is
 “ commonly understood; this Assertion of our
 “ Saviour’s most naturally implies, that at length,
 “ tho’ not soon, the Wicked are to be delivered
 “ out of that Prison; and is clearly against the
 “ proper Eternity of Hell-Torments.”

THIS Assertion of our Saviour’s cannot imply all this, unless also it be supposed, that the Wicked in Hell are capable of making this complete Payment; that is, I presume, of repenting, and making their Peace with God; a Point by no means clear, either from this, or any other Text of Scripture. Nay, Mr. *W.* himself assures us, upon his own *Authorities*, that in *Gebenna*, or *Hell*, there is *no Repentance*. “ This, he says, is
 “ perfectly agreeable to the Testimonies sacred
 “ and

“ and primitive ; which *all agree*, that what
 “ Repentance or Pardon soever there may be in
 “ *Hades*, the State of Preparation, there is no
 “ Hopes of either in *Gebenna*, or *Hell* itself *.”
 If in other Places of his Book he expresses some
 Hopes, and drops some Hints, not very con-
 sistent with this Declaration, I cannot help it.
 I am willing, that he should not contradict him-
 self, at least ; and, perhaps, what follows may
 clear up all : “ There can be no Obstacle to my
 “ Belief of *Origen’s* Doctrine (that of the *Resto-*
 “ *ration*) but the Supposal of an *utter moral*
 “ *Incapacity* in the Constitutions of these worst
 “ of free Agents ever repenting and amending ;
 “ without which Repentance and Amendment,
 “ as such Creatures cannot, so it is no way de-
 “ sirable, that they should, ever be made happy,
 “ either in this, or another World †.” Here,
 then, the Point must rest at present, for *these*
 Words of our Saviour do not determine it ; being
 only an Allusion to *forensick* Causes, whereby,
 when a Person is once cast into Prison, he is not
 (in the usual Course of things) discharged thence,
 till he has paid *the uttermost Farthing* of his
 Debt ‡. The Particle *till*, (or *ἕως αὐ*) does not
 imply

* P. 73.

† P. 131.

‡ *Literalis enim sensus loquitur de Judiciis forensibus in hac vita. Allegoria verò, juxta Christi & veterum etiam interpretationem, ad fraternam Reconciliationem, dum in hac vita sumus, hortatur, similitudine petita à civilibus Judiciis, ostendens, sine spe salutis in æternum damnandos illos, qui vel Reconciliationem petere nolunt, vel offensam remittere negant, sed in inimiciis moriuntur. Chemnicii Examen Conc. Trident. pars 3. p. 120. Where this Text is fully vindicated from favouring the Popish Doctrine of Purgatory, as also Mr. W’s.*

of Future Punishment. 17

imply that he ever will do so ; being frequently used in Scripture, of Events that never come to pass at all.

Nº V.

Matt. v. 29, 30. *It is profitable for thee that one of thy Members should perish, and not that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell.*

IF our Saviour had thought of the Doctrine of Annihilation, he might possibly have said, *It is profitable for thee that one of thy Members should perish, (viz. here upon Earth) and not that thy whole Body should perish in Gehenna.* The Word ἀπόλῃται, here repeated, and used in opposition to the perishing of one Member, would have been stronger than in other Places, where there is no such Opposition.

Nº VI.

Matt. vii. 14. *Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.*

THESE Words have no other relation to the Subject we are upon, than as they suggest an Argument, of which the Writers on the other side of the Question never fail to make their advantage. They are all willing to suppose, when it will serve their turn, that * *much the greatest*
C part

* P. 18.

So Dr. Burnet too has his *maximam partem gentis humanæ damnatum iri ad pœnas æternas* ; though he owns in the very next Sentence that he knows nothing of the matter, and that the *Numerus miserorum planè incertus sit.* De Statu Mort. p. 290.

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part of Mankind will inevitably be damned. This gives an Alarm to the Imagination, and the Passions; which immediately, without entering into the Merits of the Cause, prejudice us against the Doctrine. The Supposition, probably, may be founded in no good Reason; but as it would lead us here into too large a Digression, we must postpone the Consideration of it, till we come to the Chapter of Objections. In the mean time we may observe that Mr. W. himself, in another Part of his Work, gives such an Interpretation of the Text before us, that no such Doctrine can be drawn from it; and concludes with saying, *there is great reason to hope, that, on the contrary, after all the gracious Methods of Providence have been tried, both in this World, and in Hades, the far greater part will at length be brought to some degree of Salvation* *. See N^o XX.

N^o VII.

Matt. vii. 19. *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire.*

See above N^o I. No farther Methods of Cultivation will be used towards a *corrupt Tree*, naturally incapable of bringing forth *good Fruit*: *It is hewn down and cast into the Fire.* And no other Probation will be afforded to Creatures, under a *moral Incapacity* of becoming better: as our Saviour's Reasoning in the Context seems to suppose they may be.

N^o

* P. 115, 116, 117, &c.

N^o VIII.

Matt. vii. 23. *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.*

HERE is plainly the Doctrine of Separation from Christ, or *Exclusion* from the Kingdom of Heaven, without any Intimation that it will not be *final*. The *Justice* of the Sentence rests upon the Wickedness of the Persons: And if these Workers of Iniquity would not continue to *work Iniquity* still, one would think they should rather be placed, somewhere, under the gracious Influences of Christ, than thus judicially and totally separated from him.

N^o IX.

Matt. viii. 12. *But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer Darknefs: There shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

THE Words, with the Verse before, shew the *impartial Justice* of God; that he will not damn or save his Creatures upon the account of any Privileges they have enjoy'd, or not enjoy'd, in this World; or out of any partial Fondness for his own *Peculium*: For they shall come from the East and West, and sit down with the faithful Patriarchs, in the Kingdom of Heaven; while the Children of the Kingdom (for their Disobedience) shall be cast out into *outer Darknefs*. “ This *outer Darknefs* (Mr. Whiston
C 2 “ thinks

“ thinks *) seems only to agree to the State of
 “ bad Men in *Hades*, before the Day of Judg-
 “ ment ; which is still described as a Place of
 “ Darknefs. *Wisd.* xvii. 14, 17, 21. 2 *Pet.* ii.
 “ 4, 17. *Jude* ver. 6, 13. *Josephus* of *Hades*,
 “ §. 1. but not to *Hell-Fire* : We having no
 “ Notion of Fire and Flame without Light,
 “ tho’ it be never so dismal. Accordingly, when
 “ our Saviour uses the like Expressions else-
 “ where, *There shall be weeping and gnashing*
 “ *of Teeth*, concerning those that are cast into
 “ *Gehenna* or *Hell-Fire* itself, at the Day of
 “ Judgment, *Matt.* xiii. 42, 50. xxiv. 51. *Luke*
 “ xiii. 28. he always omits there the mention
 “ of that *Darknefs* : Which is not a little
 “ remarkable.”

I THINK, there is little remarkable in all this besides Mr. *W*’s Inattention. Good Men shall come from all Quarters of the World, and shall sit down (as it were at Table) with the ancient and holy Patriarchs in the Kingdom of Heaven, partaking of all the *Light* and *Festivity* of that glorious

* P. 36. Mr. *Whiston* has long been of opinion, and is still, (see p. 110.) that Hell will be in the Atmosphere of a Comet. Now surely there is some Darknefs in the Atmospheres of Comets, since he himself tells us, that they best answer the *Chaotick* or primary State of Planets, of all other Bodies in the Universe. See his *Astronomical Principles*, p. 90. And accordingly, having observed that Hell is described in Scripture, as a State of *Darknefs*, of *outward Darknefs*, of *Blacknefs of Darknefs*, of *Torment* and *Punishment for Ages, or Ages of Ages*, &c. he adds, this Description in every Circumstance, exactly agrees with the Nature of a Comet, ascending from the hot Regions near the Sun, and going into the cold Regions beyond *Saturn*, &c. *Astron. Prin.* p. 156.

glorious *Kingdom*; while the Wicked shall not be admitted into this *luminous* Place and happy Society, but shall be cast out into the *exteriour*, or *outer*, *Darkness*. There is no occasion that this *Darkness* should be *total*. It is *Darkness*, and dismal *Darkness* too, in comparison of the *Light* which they enjoy, who sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven. What if our Saviour sometimes omits the mention of this *outer Darkness*? He does not omit it at other times, where it comes in with the greatest Propriety, in opposition to the *Light* which they have who are *within*, and partake of the *Feast*. Thus *Matt. xxii. 13.* the Man who had not on a *Wedding-Garment*, is order'd to be bound *hand and foot*, and to be *cast into the outer Darkness: There shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*. And what *Time* is it when *the King* comes in to see the *Guests*, but the same when he *cometh*, and *reckoneth* with his Servants, in the Parable of the *Talents*, *Matt. xxv. 19.* that is, at the Day of Judgment? It may be questioned too whether Mr. *Whiston's* own *References* above, be all to his purpose: But the thing is not worth disputing. Be it that *Hades* is described as a Place of *Darkness*, surely *Gebenna*, or *Tartarus*, is so too, according to all Notions both ancient and modern *. And as to our having *no Notion of Fire and Flame without Light*; we need only recollect, that *Fire* and *Flame* are by no

C 3

means

* Vid. *Windet de vita functorum Statu: Sect. ix. Ut autem Cœlo omnia Bona, ita Tartaro contraria mala tribuere solent. Cœlo Lucem,——Tartaro Tenebras, &c. p. 224.*

means incompatible with very great Darknefs :
*And the Mountain burnt with Fire unto the
 midst of Heaven, with Darknefs, Clouds, and
 thick Darknefs.* Deut. iv. 11.

N^o X.

Matt. x. 28. *But rather fear him which is able
 to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.* See
 N^o LXIX.

UPON which Text thus Mr. *Whiston* * :
 “ These Words of our Saviour do much more
 “ favour the *Destruction* of the Wicked in
 “ Hell, than the *Preservation* of them to en-
 “ dure the Torments of an endless Eternity.
 “ Nay, they farther imply, that not the Body
 “ only, but the Soul itself is capable of this
 “ Destruction there also. Altho’ it ought to
 “ be noted, that our Saviour does not in this
 “ place affirm that both Soul and Body *shall*
 “ actually be destroy’d in *Gebenna* † ; but only
 “ that it is *in the power of God* to destroy them
 “ there. Whence we may note farther, that
 “ as *Worms* and *Fire*, which we shall see are to
 “ be the Agents in this Destruction, are only of
 “ themselves capable of *destroying the Body* ;
 “ and as no other Text, I think, speaks directly
 “ of

* P. 36.

† It is unquestionable, that *it is in the power of God* to annihilate both Soul and Body either in *Gebenna*, or out of it ; but it is far from being unquestionable that our Saviour affirms this here ; since the original Word ἀπολέσαι, as well as our English Word *destroy*, may mean quite another thing.

“ of the *Destruction of the Soul*; so is there
 “ room for Hope, that the Soul may not be
 “ then utterly destroy’d; but may remain ca-
 “ pable of a second Resurrection, after the second
 “ Death is over; as seems to have been inti-
 “ mated by the Prophet *Esdra*s, p. 29. *prius*.”

HERE we may observe that Mr. *W.* gives up, in effect, the System which he seems most inclined to favour, through his whole Book, *viz.* that of *Annihilation*, or *utter Destruction* of the Wicked: since he owns that our Saviour does not *in this place* affirm that both Soul and Body *shall* be destroy’d, but *only* that it is *in the power of God* to destroy them. Which no one denies; but then we are not to recur to the *Power of God* in such Questions as these, but rather to the Nature of things, and the Declarations of the *Will of God*. And as from the Nature of the Soul we have no reason to think that it will be *utterly destroy’d*, so, with regard to the Declarations of God’s Will, Mr. *W.* himself again will tell us, that *no other Text* speaks directly of the *Destruction of the Soul*: That is, in short, neither *this*, nor any other *Text* in the Bible teaches us this Doctrine. And why then, when our Saviour is directing the Attention of Christians to the awful Sanctions of another World, will Mr. *W.* distract or divert this Attention, by suggesting something, which is not directly taught in any *one Text* of Scripture? However, he says, these Words *do much more favour the Destruction of the Wicked in Hell,*

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than the Preservation of them to endure the Torments of an endless Eternity. If by *Preservation* he means that they are *supernaturally*, or *præternaturally*, preserv'd, above and beyond what the Condition and Powers of their Nature would otherwise extend to, only on purpose that they may endure these endless Torments; we say no such thing. This is a Misrepresentation of the Doctrine, in order to make it appear unjust and cruel. But then, as we, on our Principles, want no *extraordinary Interposition* of Power or Providence to *preserve* them in their Existence; so, on the other hand, it would be unphilosophical in our Adversaries, to have recourse to such *extraordinary Interposition*, without Reason, and without Proof, in order to *annihilate*, or *destroy* them. They must stand by the Consequences of that Nature which God has given them. How then, after all, do our Saviour's Words, in the Passage before us, *favour the Destruction of the Wicked in Hell?* Is it because the Word ἀπολέσαι is used? That cannot be: * A Word used a thousand times, where nothing of this Sense is intended. To go no farther than the *thirty-ninth Verse* of this Chapter; there our Saviour says ὁ ἀπόλεσας τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτῷ (which literally render'd is, he that *destroyeth his Soul*) *for my sake*, shall find it: Where, for certain, our Saviour cannot mean such *Destruction* as implies *ceasing to exist*. I will not multiply Instances in so plain a Case; but this I assert, that so far as the Import merely of

* For the Proof of this, see N^o LIX.

of this Word is concern'd, it is of too uncertain and ambiguous signification to build any Doctrine of this Consequence upon. The Body and Soul are truly *destroy'd* (in the common and vulgar Sense of the Word) *in Hell*, when they are cast into Hell, without any prospect of Deliverance from it. Compare Dr. *John Warren's* Sermons, Vol. 2. Ser. 11. p. 249, &c.

Nº XI.

Matt. xii. 31, 32. *Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men : but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men.*

And whosoever speaketh a Word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.

HERE Mr. *W.* observes; " That some Sins
" not forgiven in this *World* or *Age*, will be
" forgiven in the *World* or *Age* to come, seems
" very clear from this Text *." But why did
he not observe too, that it is likewise *clear from*
this Text, (for the Text plainly declares it,) that there is *one Sin* which will *never* be forgiven? And what if it should not be any *peculiar Heinousness* in the Nature of this particular Sin, that renders it incapable of Pardon; but rather that the Persons guilty of it are
thereby

* P. 37.

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thereby suppos'd to be *totally harden'd*, and fix'd in an *incurably wicked* Temper? Then, one would think, it should follow, that every Sin which concludes in final Obduracy, and the same incurably wicked Temper, should by Parity of Reason, and the same Rule of Justice, be liable to the *same Condemnation*. In short, it is much clearer from this Text that some Sin shall *never* be forgiven, than that some Sins not forgiven in *this World*, will be forgiven in the *World to come*. The *former* is the express Declaration of the Text; the *latter* is only an Inference drawn from an ambiguous Expression, which *may* imply no such thing. This *World*, or *Age*, and the *World*, or *Age*, *to come*, as the Parts of a *Whole*, may be put to signify that *Whole* itself; and then the Meaning will be, that the Person guilty of this Sin, will *never* be forgiven. Such a manner of speaking is familiar enough in Scripture; and that it is no more than such a *Mode of Speech* in this place, I am the rather inclin'd to believe, because St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* express the *same thing* without any such Distinction: He *hath never forgiveness*, says the former, *Mark* iii. 29. *It shall not be forgiven*, says the latter, *Luke* xii. 10. *

No

* See a larger Account of this Text, in Archbishop Wake's Discourse of *Purgatory*; printed in the late Prefervative against Popery, in *Folio*; Vol. 2. Tit. viii. p. 119. And in *Chemnicus*, ubi sup. Præterea tempus futuri Seculi, de tempore post Resurrectionem mortuorum in Scriptura accipitur. Adventus enim Christi ad Judicium, faciet finem huic Seculo. Matt. xiii. 24. Et quando

N^o XII.

Matt. xiii. 30, 40, 41, 42. *Let both grow together until the Harvest : And in the time of Harvest I will say to the Reapers, gather ye together first the Tares, and bind them in Bundles to burn them : But gather the Wheat into my Barn. See N^o II.*

40. *As therefore the Tares are gathered, and burnt in the Fire; so shall it be in the End of this World.*

41. *The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do Iniquity;*

42. *And shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire: There shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.*

THIS Parable of the *Tares* contains some noble Instructions, on Subjects of a very high Importance, which have always perplex'd the Inquiries of Mankind: such as the Origin of Evil, the Conduct and Designs of Providence in

quando qui bona egerunt, ibunt post Resurrectionem in vitam æternam, Johan. vi. illud tempus vocatur futurum Seculum, Marc. x. & Luc. xx. Tempus Resurrectionis expresse vocatur tempus futuri Seculi. Quando igitur Matthæus nominat futurum Seculum, intelligit extremum Judicium post Resurrectionem mortuorum. Malè ergo de intermedio tempore inter Mortem & Resurrectionem exponitur. So that here is nothing said in this Text, of Forgiveness in this *intermediate State*; which however is the Season of *Purgatory* with the Papists, and of *castigatory Punishments in Hades* with Mr. W.

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in permitting it, the true Notion of human Life as a State of *Trial*; where there must be some Mixture of Evil as an Exercise of Virtue, and for the Proof and Manifestation of Fidelity and Obedience *. But this Plan of Providence will one day be finished; and when it is so, we are here assured, an entire *Separation* will be made between the two Sorts of Men, (for only *two* Sorts are suppos'd) the Good and the Evil. The *former* shall go to receive their Reward, *Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*; the *latter*, to their Place of Punishment; they shall be cast *into a Furnace of Fire*. That this will *utterly destroy* them, is not said; nor, if contrary to Reason and Scripture, in other places, to be suppos'd. Here is mention of *wailing and gnashing of Teeth*, which so far must imply Continuance in Being; but no hint of *Anihilation*. As little, (or, if possible, less) ground is there to expect, from this Parable, or the Explanation of it, any future State of *Trial* for these wicked, or any *Restoration* of them to Happiness, and the Favour of God. We are rather here plainly taught, on the contrary, that

as

* Magnæ hoc disputationis est; cur à Deo, cum justitiam terræ daret; sit retenta Diversitas: —Nunc designare id brevissime satis est: Virtutem aut cerni non posse, nisi habeat vitia contraria; aut non esse perfectam, nisi exerceatur adversis. Hanc enim Deus bonorum, ac malorum voluit esse distantiam, ut qualitatem boni ex malo sciamus, item mali ex bono; nec alterius ratio intelligi, sublato altero, potest. Deus ergo non exclusit malum, ut ratio virtutis constare posset. *Lactant. Lib. v. Cap. 7. Confer Lib. vi. C. 15.*

of Future Punishment. 29

as the present World is a State of Probation, so this Probation will be *decisive* and *final*. Therefore, as our Saviour concludes, *who hath Ears to hear, let him hear.*

N^o XIII.

Matt. xiii. 49, 50. *So shall it be at the End of the World: The Angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just; and shall cast them into the Furnace of Fire: There shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.*

THIS Parable of the *Net cast into the Sea*, which gather'd of every kind, represents to us the Nature of Christ's Kingdom in this World; that it consists of *good* and *bad*: But assures us, at the same time, that it shall not be *always* so. As the Fishermen gather'd the good Fish into Vessels, but cast the bad away (*τὰ δὲ σαπρὰ ἐξωβαλον*, not put them into the Sea again to improve against some other time, but cast them quite away, as corrupt, and good for nothing;) so, at the End of the World, will the Angels sever the wicked from among the just, and cast them (not into another State of Probation,) into their place of Punishment: *There shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.* Compare N^o XII.

N^o XIV.

Matt. xviii. 8, 9.—*It is better for thee to enter into Life halt or maimed, rather than having two Hands or two Feet, to be cast into ever-*

everlasting Fire.—ver. 9. *It is better for thee to enter into Life with one Eye, rather than having two Eyes to be cast into Hell-fire.*

HERE Mr. *Whiston* says, “ These two Expressions are for certain, directly parallel, and neither of them at all imply the proper Eternity of Hell-torments *.”

WE have heard this Fire call'd *unquenchable* before ; see N^o II. but as this is the first Place where we meet with *everlasting Fire* (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, the Fire which is everlasting,) we must consider here what has been suggested in diminution of the Meaning of that Phrase. Mr. *W.* here and every where, renders it *lasting Fire* : So ζῶν αἰώνιῳ, with him, is only *lasting Life* ; for, according to his Scheme, neither the *Blessed*, nor the *Wicked*, are to exist really for ever, in the Sense of a *proper Eternity*. One Argument therefore commonly insisted on by Divines for the proper Eternity of these Torments, is, as to Mr. *W.* himself at least, precluded : I mean *that* taken from the *same Words* being used to express the *Eternity* of Hell-torments, which are used in Scripture to express the *Eternity* of the Joys of Heaven. However, this Consideration ought still to have its proper Weight with all those, who do not adopt this Part of Mr. *Whiston's* Scheme. If the Words in dispute express a *proper*

proper Eternity in one Case, it will be hard to say, so far as the mere Force and Signification of these Words is concern'd, why they should not express a *proper Eternity* in the other Case. If I hear the Joys of Heaven and the Torments of Hell *both* call'd *everlasting*, (and it is the same in the *Greek*, or any other Language,) though I may from *other Topicks* imagine there will be a difference in their Duration, yet so far as I attend merely to *this Term*, I can have no reason for such an Imagination. For the Term is the same, and while I attend to it *alone*, I must think the Meaning is the same likewise. But let us return to Mr. *W.* who seems to say, that the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Words translated *everlasting*, signify in Scripture no such thing. Take here his own Words :

* “ THE original Words *Olam* in *Hebrew*,
“ and *Αἰών* in *Greek*, with their Plurals and
“ Deri-

* P. 20. See Mr. *W.*’s Discourse of the *Restoration of the Jews*, published in his *Sermons and Essays*, 1709. He there says, p. 226, that the *genuine Import* of this Phrase, *for ever*, in the *sacred Dialect* is the *entire Duration* of any *long and famous Period*, about which the Discourse is ; or during the *entire Continuance of the Existence* of any thing which is spoken of, from its *primary Beginning*, till its final End. In this Sense he takes the *Laws of Moses* to be *for ever* ; as they were to continue not only during the *first or second Temple*, but all that *Αἰών*, or those *Αἰῶνες*, which that preparatory Dispensation was to be commensurate to ; till it was to be swallow’d up in a new and more noble *Αἰών*, the *glorious Age and Kingdom of the great Messias himself*, in the *End of the World*. This Law of *Moses*, he says, has
never

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“ Derivatives ; which are the almost only ones
 “ made use of by the sacred Writers to deter-
 “ mine the Duration of the Punishment of the
 “ Wicked in the other World ; and are render’d
 “ *eternal* or *everlasting* ; and suppos’d to mean
 “ a Duration properly *endless* or *co-eternal* with
 “ God himself ; do by no means so signify in
 “ Scripture : Nor are they ever, when spoken
 “ of created Beings, to be extended longer than
 “ the several grand *Ages* or Periods of this
 “ sublunary World ; beginning with the *Mo-
 “ saick* Creation ; hardly yet 6000 Years ago ;
 “ and ending after the glorious *Millennium*, at
 “ the ‘general Judgment, and Consummation
 “ of all things. Nay, these Words are very
 “ frequently of a great deal narrower Extension,
 “ and reach only to much shorter Periods in-
 “ cluded therein.”

WE readily grant, that these Words in the
 Old Testament, and especially as applied to the
Ordinances of the Law of *Moses*, have this
 narrow Extension which he speaks of. Yet the
 Words are capable of signifying a proper Eter-
 nity, and where the Subject will bear it, really
 do

never *been properly and formally abolished* ; and is to be
 restor’d *towards the End of the World* : and this seems to
 be that which is so often hinted at in the *Pentateuch*,
 where the Statutes and Ordinances are so often said to
 be *for ever* ; &c. N. B. This is a very different Account
 of the Duration of an *Αἰών* from what he gives now,
viz. 68, or 4 or 500 Years. Q. Whether he does not
*take away the Use of Words, and make them signify at
 random what he pleases ?*

do so. Even *Ἀιών*, which, according to this Gentleman *, signifies a shorter Duration than its Plural, or the Reduplication of it, seems to me to signify a proper Eternity, in the 136th *Psalms*, and other places. Will any one limit the *Mercy of God*, and say it endures for an *Age* only? Yet what is it else that Mr. *W.* says p. 8. Where he bids us note, that as the *Punishments of the wicked are said to be εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, or αἰῶνια* for an *Age*, or for ever; so is the *Mercy of God to his Creatures celebrated as of the very same Duration also*. If the *Mercy of God*, and the *Punishments of the wicked*, be of the *very same Duration*, and that *Duration* be really *for ever*; Mr. *W.* has here given up the Point. But if he means that both of them are only for an *Age*, he makes this *Psalms* such a *Celebration of the Mercy of God*, as I believe never enter'd into the Heart, or Head, of any sober Man: O give Thanks unto the Lord, for—his Mercy endureth for an *Age*; that is, according to Mr. *W.*'s shortest Calculation †, 68 Years, and according to his largest, 575. I am very certain the *Mercy of God* will endure *for ever*, upon the proper Objects of it; and for the rest,—they are no Objects of it at all. But to proceed: Whatever the Words in dispute may sometimes signify in the Old Testament, it will be harder to prove that they are used with so much Latitude in the New ‡. When apply'd to God, they confessedly

* P. 39.

† P. 39.

‡ —Haud æqua mihi videtur lex interpretandi, ut quæ

feffedly denote a proper Eternity : when apply'd to the Happinefs of the Saints in Heaven, they have hitherto univerfally been thought to denote the fame : Mr. *W.* indeed at laft is pleas'd to deny it : (Whether in fo doing he has not *made God a Liar*, according to St. *John's* Doctrine, 1 *John* v. 10, 11. I leave him to confider ;) What Reason then is there why they fhould not denote the fame, when apply'd to the Punifhments of the Wicked ? I mean fo far as the Import of thefe Words merely is concern'd, for of *that* only we are now fpeaking. Is there any Intimation given, that they are here to be taken in a different, or lefs extenfive Senfe ? Nothing of that kind appears. It rather appears, comparing them with other Expref- fions, and other Declarations of our Lord in the Gospel, that they are to be underftood in the full'eft Senfe of which they are capable. What could the common People think, when they heard our Saviour not only call this Fire *αἰώνιον*, but declare plainly, and with moft emphatick Repetition, that it *never fhall be quenched* ? See *Mark* ix. 43, &c. where it is fo declared *five times over*, in the compafs of *five or fix* Verfes. Did our Lord *deceive the People* ? Would he be guilty of any of thofe *pious Frauds*, againft which

quæ nonnunquam à Prophetis figuratè ufurpantur, ea femper & ubique in eodem fenfu fint intelligenda. *Stylus Evangelii eft caftigatior*, nec tam facilè diffilit à fenfu literali : à quo nunquam recedendum eft ab Interprete, nifi cum coëgerit materiæ fubjectæ neceffitas. *Burnet. De Stat. Mort.* p. 110.

which Mr. *W.* is so warm *? A word from him, on the other side, would have clear'd up this Point. But as the Case now stands, he has not cured, but confirm'd the Prejudices of the People; as if he had approv'd the Maxim, afterwards used by one of his pretended *Vicars*, *Si Populus vult decipi, decipiat*. But I have not yet done with Mr. *Whiston's* Criticisms upon this Article: he tells us, the Words under Consideration, *when spoken of created Beings, are never to be extended longer than the several grand Ages or Periods of this sublunary World; beginning with the Mosaick Creation, and ending after the Millennium, at the general Judgment, and Consummation of all things.* Now,

To what *Age* or *Period* of this sublunary World, can the word αἰώνιον be design'd to extend in the xxvth of St. *Matthew* ver. 46? These *Ages* or *Periods* seem here to be accomplish'd. The great Judge has pass'd the decisive

D 2

Sentence,

* P. 139.

It should here be remember'd, that it was the common Belief of the *Jews*, in our Saviour's time, that the Punishments of the Wicked will be eternal. This, I think, may be fairly collected from what *Josephus* says of the *Pharisees*, who were the popular Instructors, the publick Leaders in Religion. They hold, says he, *the Soul to be immortal; that only those of the good pass into another Body, but those of the wicked are to be punish'd with everlasting Punishment: (αἰδίῳ τιμωρίᾳ.)* *De Bell. Jud.* Lib. 2. Ed. *Hudson*. p. 1065. Compare *Antiq.* Lib. 18. p. 793. As this then was the Opinion of the popular and prevailing *Sect* among the *Jews*, and consequently of the People, there was more occasion for our Saviour to confute it, had it been false, than confirm it, as he has done here, and in numerous Passages of his Gospel.

Sentence, has made the final Separation ; and the Consequence is, the Wicked go into *everlasting Punishment*, (εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον,) and the Righteous into *Life eternal*; (εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.) By what Ages or Periods of this sublunary World can the Extent of the Word, αἰώνιον, here be limited, when this sublunary World is at an end? In short, so far is it from being true that the Sense of the Word is to be confin'd by any Ages or Periods of this World, that it is most frequently, in the New Testament, applied to things, which do not properly commence, till the Ages and Periods of this World are finish'd ; viz. the Rewards, and Punishments, of the World *to come*. Then the *Mystery*, (or the mysterious Dispensation,) of God, by Jesus Christ, shall *be finished* ; and *Time* *, with

* See *Rev.* x. 6, 7. I only make use of these Words, without pretending to say that this is the precise Meaning of them. But the thing intended is plain ; when Christ shall have deliver'd up the Kingdom, (the Kingdom which he now administers, or *quoad præsentem Formam Administrationis*,) to God even the Father, *then cometh the End* ; beyond which, we know from the Gospel of no *Ages or Periods*, but an *eternal, immutable State*. Quæ Ratio universitatem ex Diversitate composuit,—eadem ævum quoque ita destinata ac distincta conditione conseruit, ut prima hæc pars ab exordio Rerum quam incolimus, temporali ætate ad finem defluat : sequens vero, quam expectamus, in infinitam æternitatem propagetur. Cum ergo finis & limes medius, qui interhiat, adfuerit, ut etiam Mundi ipsius Species transferatur, æque temporalis, quæ illi Dispositioni æternitatis aulæi vice oppansa est, tunc restituetur omne humanum Genus, ad expungendum quod in isto ævo boni seu mali meruit, & exin dependendum in immensam æternitatis perpetuitatem. Ideoque

with its Ages and Periods, shall be no longer. Yet still God, (God himself at least, Mr. *W.* will allow,) will live *εἰς τῆς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, strictly and properly, for ever and ever. And we have repeated Assurances, in the very same Words, that some of his Creatures shall do so too : And therefore it seems to be a very fanciful and arbitrary Interpretation, to limit these Words, (which in themselves, we see, are capable of denoting a proper Eternity,) to Ages and Periods, which will then be over. And indeed

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all

Ideoque nec Mors jam, nec rursus ac rursus Resurrectio, sed erimus iidem qui nunc, nec alii post ; Dei quidem Cultores apud Deum semper, superinduti Substantia propria æternitatis ; Profani vero, & qui non integre ad Deum, in pœnam æque jugis Ignis, habentes ex ipsa natura ejus, divina scilicet, Subministrationem Incorruptibilitatis. Novērunt & Philosophi Diversitatem arcani & publici Ignis. *Tertullian.* Apol. Cap. xlviii. *Tertullian* speaks of Hell-fire in the same manner as *Lactantius* and *Minutius Felix* do ; see p. 92, and 94, of Mr. *Whiston's* Book. It is plain, they all took it to be something quite different from our common culinary Fire. But because *Tertullian* considers Lightning, and the Fire in Burning Mountains, which does not consume them, as Examples (*exemplaria*) of the Perpetuity of Hell-fire, see what a strange Remark Mr. *W.* has made p. 85. viz. that this Hell-fire is to arise from our present Earth, and to burn up the wicked while it is such an Earth, and no longer. Confer, *De Pœnitentia*, Cap. ult. And how weak is what he suggests, about the Difference of *Tertullian's* Sentiments, as to this Article, before, and after, he was a *Montanist* ? Since 'tis plain, in the two Passages refer'd to above, which according to Mr. *W.* were wrote in these different Periods, he asserts the same Doctrine of the never-ending Perpetuity of Hell-fire. However, that he was not a *Montanist* when he wrote his *Apologetic*, see Mr. *Welchman's* Preface to his Edition of his Book *Adversus Praxean*. p. xi.

all the Dust that Mr. *W.* has rais'd, p. 22. about God's *making*, or *framing*, τὰς αἰῶνας, *the Ages*, &c. may be clear'd, only by recollecting that *that* Word sometimes denotes the *World*, sometimes the *Ages* or Periods of the *World*, or any lesser Periods included therein, and sometimes Duration itself, in the *Abstract*, *Before*, or *After*, all Worlds whatever. See N^o XXII.

As this is the first time we meet with the Expression of *everlasting Fire*, I have been the longer upon it; because Mr. *W.* has made a stir about it, and something depends upon it; though much less, perhaps, than is commonly imagin'd. It will appear in the progress of this Undertaking, that, for my part, I build not my Doctrine merely upon the Foundation of any *verbal Criticisms* whatever. But when our Lord's *plain Representations* of human Life and the Nature and Design of his Kingdom, and his *plain Declarations* of the final Orders and Dispositions which He, the Judge himself, will make, at the Consummation of all things; (which are, with me, the great and primary Arguments on this Subject,) when these Considerations have directed our Thoughts to a Conclusion, agreeable to the whole Dispensation of God, both in Nature and the Gospel; then we may attend to *Words*, and draw such Arguments from them, though but of an inferior and secondary Nature, as it will be no easy matter to set aside.

Nº XV.

Matt. xviii. 34, 35. *And his Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespases.*

FROM these Texts Mr. *W.* thus argues ;
 * “ This Text, joined to the former *Chap.* v.
 “ 26. already set down, are clear, that the
 “ *Debt* of Punishment which will be exacted
 “ of the Wicked in another World, will be only
 “ proportionable to strict Right and Justice, but
 “ no more : Which I take to be an absolute
 “ Demonstration against the proper Eternity of
 “ that Punishment : Nay indeed, most natu-
 “ rally to imply, that where this *Debt* is vastly
 “ great, both the Degree and Duration of the
 “ Torments will be vastly great also ; but still
 “ in exact proportion with such Debt, and not
 “ otherwise.”

EVERY one knows from his natural Idea of God, even without *this*, or *any other*, Text of Scripture, that the Wicked will be punished in another World, only proportionably to Right and Justice. But when Mr. *W.* takes it for granted, that this is a Demonstration, *an absolute Demonstration*, against the Eternity of their Punishments ; he must bear to be reminded,

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that

that this is taking for granted, the great Point to be prov'd. How is it contrary to Right and Justice, that wicked Spirits, and wicked Men, (one as well as the other,) should be *excluded* out of Christ's Kingdom in Heaven, the Kingdom only of the Just? Especially when the Consequences of this *Exclusion* will be in exact proportion to the Guilt and Demerit of each Sufferer's Sin, and the Malignity of his Temper. So that though there be no Difference in the Duration of their Punishments; the various, perhaps to us *inconceivable*, Degrees of them, will make a great one. This, as far as I can see, must be the Case; unless they either *cease to exist*, of which this Text gives no Intimation; or else be *deliver'd out of this Prison*, as Mr. W. intimates, in his Comment on *Matt. v. 26.* they will be, when they have paid *the Debt*. But how can they pay *all that is due*, whose original Stock and Principal, which they might have improv'd in this Life, but did not, *is taken from them*; according to our Lord's Application of the Parable of the *Talents*? *From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath*; *Matt. xxv. 29.* And Mr. W. himself sometimes appears to be of this opinion; since he tells us in *one* place, (p. 131.) that *without Repentance and Amendment, as such Creatures cannot; so is it no way desirable that they should ever be made happy*: And in another assures us, that it is *perfectly agreeable to the Testimonies sacred and primitive, that in Gehenna, or Hell, there is no Repentance*, p. 72, 73.

See

of Future Punishment.

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See above, N^o IV. and compare Archbishop Dawes's fifth Sermon, p. 171, &c. Printed at Cambridge 1707.

N^o XVI.

Matt. xxii. 13. *Then said the King to the Servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer Darkneſs: there ſhall be weeping and gnawing of Teeth. See above, under N^o IX.*

It may be added here, upon the Authority of an ancient Commentator *, that *Binding him hand and foot* is depriving him of the *practical Powers* of the Soul; (which looks as if his *moral Agency* was at an end, and that there was no other *Probation* for him;) and thus it answers to the *taking away* the original Talent from the slothful Servant, *Matt. xxv. 28, 29.*

N^o XVII.

Matt. xxiii. 33. *Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye eſcape the Damnation of Hell?*

THESE Words determine nothing concerning the *Duration* of the Punishments in Hell; but intimate

* *Bind his Hands and Feet*, that is, the *Practical Powers* of his Soul. For in the present Life we may work and act; but in the future, all the *practical Powers* of the Soul are bound; and it is not poſſible to do any good thing towards making amends, or as a *Compensation*, for our Sins. *Theophyl.* in loc. In the ſame manner he explains the Command to *bind the Tares in Bundles*, *Matt. xiii. 30.* No one then any longer will have power to work, but every *practical Power* will be bound.

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intimate to us, pretty strongly, what sort of Persons are liable to them. Our Lord no where in the Gospel treats any one, how great a Sinner soever, with so much Severity, where he could discover any Hopes of Amendment.

N^o XVIII.

Matt. xxiv. 40, 41. *Then shall two be in the Field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two Women shall be grinding at the Mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

THAT is, not arbitrarily, and without Reason; but the *Wicked* are sever'd from among the *Just*. See N^o XII. and XIII.

N^o XIX.

Verf. 51.—*And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

ONLY observe that *this* is agreeable to the rest of our Lord's *Representations* of this matter. He is so far from giving any Hint of any thing analogous to a State of Probation, to be expected after the present; or of any Likelihood of the Repentance, or Recovery, of the Wicked; that he represents them, on the contrary, as utterly disabled: They are *bound hand and foot*, they are *cut asunder*, the Talent originally intrusted to them is intirely taken away from them, and they are cast into outer *Darkness*; Expressions, which,

which, if they mean any thing, seem to insinuate, that they are laid under great Disadvantages, (perhaps, a total Incapacity,) with regard to free Agency, moral Improvement, or any Alteration whatever for the better, of their moral State and Character. See N^o XVI. XXI.

N^o XX.

Matt. xxv. 10, 11, 12.—*The Bridegroom came, and they that were ready, went in with him to the Marriage, and the Door was shut. Afterward came also the other Virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.*

Nothing can be plainer than it is from these Words, and the Drift and Design of the Parable to which they belong; that when the Righteous are enter'd into the Kingdom of Heaven, and the *Door is shut*, all After-thought or Application of the Wicked for Admission will be in vain*. This is no incidental Part of the Parable, but the *direct Instruction* which it conveys; and on which the practical Direction, ver. 13. is founded: *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.* What State awaits them, or what Place is prepared for them, after this *Exclusion*; we must learn, as we can, from other Places: But from *this* it is plain enough, that it is not that State, and Place, which they that are ready enter

* Vid. *Theophyl.* in loc.

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enter into, with the *Bridegroom*, distinguish'd by the Name of the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

MR. *W.* makes an Observation from this Parable, of which, tho' not directly to the Point in hand, it may not be improper to take some notice. It is not, he says *, "to be quite overlook'd, that our Saviour himself, in the latter part of his Ministry, intimates to us, that the Number of good Men was hardly then inferior to that of the bad; I mean in the Parable of the *ten Virgins: five of which were wise, and five were foolish.*" But the Parable has no relation to the latter part of our Saviour's Ministry, any farther than it might be spoke at that time; but relates to the *Day of Judgment: Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened, &c.* ver. 1. That is, at the *Day of Judgment*, as appears from the Connexion with the *last Chapter* †, and from what follows in *this*. If therefore any Conclusion can be drawn from hence, about the *equal Number* of good Men that will obtain Salvation, Mr. *W.* has hurt his own Argument. For it is a much more considerable

* P. 118.

† Vid. *Hieron.* in loc. Prudentem semper admoneo lectorem, ut non superstitiosis acquiescat interpretationibus, & quæ commaticè pro fingentium dicuntur arbitrio: sed consideret priora, media, & sequentia; & nectat sibi universa, quæ scripta sunt. Ex hoc ergo quod infert; *Vigilate, quia nescitis diem neque horam*, intelliguntur universa, quæ dixit, id est, de duobus qui in agro sunt, & de duabus molentibus, & de Patrefamiliâs qui servo suo credidit substantiam, & de decem Virginibus, ideo Parabolas esse præmissas; ut quia ignoramus omnes *Judicii Diem*, sollicitè nobis lumen bonorum Operum præparemus; ne dum ignoramus, Judex veniat.

considerable Point gained, to have an *equal Number* of good Men, that will obtain Salvation, at the Day of Judgment, than (in *Judea* suppose) in the *latter part* of Christ's Ministry. Indeed, if we may argue in this manner, there is *another Parable* which opens to us a still more comfortable Scene than this ; in the Parable of the *Marriage of the King's Son*, when the King comes in *to see the Guests*, he finds but *one Man* among that great Multitude, collected from *Hedges and Highways*, who had not on a *Wedding-Garment*. Which intimates to us, according to Mr. *W's* way of Reasoning in the other Case, that the Number of Christians who will obtain Salvation, will be in a vastly greater proportion than that of Half. And God Almighty grant that they may !

Nº XXI.

Matt. xxv. 28, 29, 30. *Take therefore the Talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten Talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance : but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

THIS Parable appears to me to teach us, very plainly, two things, of great moment in this Debate ; and which are indeed the main Hinges on which it turns : The one is, that the present Life is a State of *Probation* ; the other, that this

Probation

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Probation will be *decisive* and *final*. The *first* lies open to our Experience, and wants no proof; but may be explained hereafter. The *last* is, in effect, what I am endeavouring to evince in the Course of these Pages. I have before observed, (see N^o IX.) that the time when *the Lord cometh, and reckoneth with his Servants*, ver. 19. is the Day of Judgment. He then finds *one*, out of *three*, who instead of *trading* with his *Talent*, had *hid it in the Earth*: That is, in the *Moral* and *Application* of the Parable, had not made that use of this probationary State, and of the several Powers, Opportunities and Capacities, (the *Sum* of all which is represented by the *Talent*,) *answerable* and *correspondent* thereto, which he ought to have done. How now does his Lord decide in this Affair? Does he, on this *fair Occasion*, give the most distant Hint that he will *bear any longer* with him, that he will *try him once more*; or, because he has *fail'd* here, remove him to some more *advantageous* Situation, where he may stand a *better Chance* for Improvement? Directly contrary; he takes the *Talent* intirely from him; that is, the *whole Sum* of his Powers as a moral and free Agent; and casts him into a Place, agreeable to this State of *moral Inactivity*, without Light, or Liberty; without Motive, Inducement, or Example to grow better. Thus the Case stands, as far as I can judge, upon the foot of this Parable; especially in conjunction with other Places and Parables of the Gospel. For this is *the sole uniform View* exhibited to us by

of Future Punishment. 47

Jesus Christ, in all his *Representations* of the Nature and Design of this World, and of Human Life, and of his Kingdom, and of the Transactions at the *last Day*. And whoever directs the Eyes of Christians to any false and flattering Prospects, contrary to this; endeavours to fix them on a Vision and Spectre only of his own Imagination, that has no Support, that I know of, either in Reason, or the written Word of God. Compare N^o XII. XIII. XVI. XIX. XX.

N^o XXII.

Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 33, 34, 41, 46. *When the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory. And before him shall be gathered all Nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats: And he shall set the Sheep on his right hand, but the Goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment: But the Righteous into Life eternal*.*

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* See Dr. John Warren's Sermon upon this Text, Vol. II. p. 237.

IN this clear, distinct, and full Account of the Proceedings at the great Day of Judgment, we find not only the Doctrine of the *Separation*, or *Exclusion*, of the Wicked; which we have often met with before; but also their State and Punishment *subsequent* to it. Their Sentence, *ver.* 41. is, to depart into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And lest any one should say, that this Fire, originally prepared for the Devil and his Angels, may *itself* be everlasting, tho' wicked Men do not everlastingly exist in it; it is expressly said, in the *last* Verse, that they shall go away into everlasting *Punishment*. There is nothing therefore left for the Adversary to do, but to *criticise* and quibble away, if he can, the Extent and Meaning of the Word αἰώνιον, or *Everlasting* *.

Now

* ——— “ If God had intended to have told us that the Punishment of wicked Men shall have no End, the Languages wherein the Scriptures are written do hardly afford fuller and more certain Words, than those that are used in this Case, whereby to express to us a Duration without End: And likewise, *which is almost a peremptory Decision of the thing*,—the Duration of the Punishment of wicked Men is in the very same Sentence expressed by the very same Word, which is used for the Duration of the Happiness of the Righteous.”—Archbp. Tillotson, Sermon on Hell-Torments.

That Αἰών and αἰώνιος signify *Eternity*, and *Eternal*, appears from the Lexicographers: See *Scapula* and *Leigh*. Αἰών, say they, quasi αἰεὶ ὢν, *Arist.* Lib. i. de Caelo, & *Phil.* de Mundo.

Καὶ γὰρ ὁ χρόνος, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ παράδειγμα [αἰών, ὁ εἰς αὐτῶν] ἐν αἰῶνι δὲ, ἔτε παρελήλυθεν

Now here let us recollect, that the Word is used in passing the most solemn Sentence in the world; and afterwards, in a Declaration of the Consequence of that Sentence: In both which, one would expect to meet with Words in their plain and common Sense, without Ambiguity. It is also to be remember'd, that the *same Word* is used of the *Life*, or Reward, of the *Righteous*, and of the *Punishment* of the *Wicked*. The Generality of Christians, from our Saviour's Time to *this*, have understood the Word to denote *Duration without End*, equally in *both Cases*; so that the Life of the Righteous, and the Punishment of the Wicked, will be really *for ever*. On the other hand, some few both in former and later Ages, allowing the *Word* to signify *Eternity* when applied to the Rewards of the Righteous, have deny'd it this *extensive Signification* when used of the Punishments of the Wicked; which, according to them, will have *an End*. At last comes Mr. *W.* and, agreeably to his enterprizing Genius, advances a Step beyond them all; assuring us, that the

E Word

λυθεν ὁ δὲν, ὅτε μέλλει, ἀλλὰ μόνον ὑφ' ἑσ-ηκεν. Philo. Ed. Mangey, Vol. II. p. 609.

Platonici duas Durationis Species esse dicebant, quarum altera vocatur αἰὼν *æternitas*, quæ ἐν ἐνὶ μένει, ut loquitur Plato in Timæo, hoc est, Successione caret; altera propriè χρόνος, tempus, quod est alterius εἰκῶν κινητῇ *Imago mobilis*, quia cum Successione elabitur. J. Clerici Not. in Oracula Chaldaica, Opp. Phil. Tom. II. p. 363.

Arrian. Epict. Lib. ii. C. 5. οὐ γὰρ εἰμι αἰὼν, ἀλλ' ἄνθρωπος.

Deus

Word does by *no* * *means* denote a proper Eternity of either Punishment or Reward; but only a long Duration of them respectively. Here then in effect are *three Interpretations*; and without going any farther, I dare leave it to the Judgment of any sober and intelligent Person, which seems to come nearest to the literal Sense of the Passage, stands clearest of Difficulties, or will best account for them, and is most agreeable to the general Style and Tenour of the New Testament,

* P. 39.

Deus Platoni est intelligibilis & æterna Substantia, unde in *Timæo* dicitur τὸ αἰεὶ ὄν, à quo τὸν Ἀΐωνα, æternitatem, deduci declarat *Plotinus Enn.* 3. Lib. VII. Cap. 1. & Cap. 3.

Vid. Prolegom. ad Platon. Parmen. Ed. Thomson, p. xxix.

The Words therefore are certainly capable of denoting Eternity, and frequently do so in the Scriptures. What Criterion then have we, whereby we may know when they denote Eternity, and when a temporal Duration only? None other that I know of, but what arises from the Context, the Nature of the thing, or Subject spoken of. Here is nothing in the Sense or Context that limits the Meaning of these Words, as applied to the Punishments of the Wicked in Hell; but much to the contrary. It is agreeable to all the other Representations of Scripture relating to this Article, to understand them in their most extensive Sense. They are equally applied to the Case of the Righteous and the Wicked; which, as Dr. Tillotson observes above, is almost decisive of the Point, to those who own the happy Eternity of the former. Wicked Men are of the same Nature with the Righteous, and immortal as well as they. There is nothing therefore in the Nature of the Beings spoken of, which excludes the Sense of Eternity; nor in the Nature of the Punishments, if they be justly deserved, what are best upon the whole, and consistent with every Perfection of God, nay, the Result of them: as I shall endeavour to shew hereafter.

Testament. The *second* Interpretation, or *Hypothesis*, (call it what you will) is perfectly arbitrary; there being no Foundation in the Words themselves, Text or Context, on which to build such a *Difference of Signification*. No manner of Intimation is given, that they are to be taken in a different Sense: or that the *same Word* has not the *same Meaning* in both Cases. Nor could any Man ever be led to doubt of this by any thing that he finds here; but when for other Reasons, (of which in their proper Place,) they took it into their heads to deny the Eternity of these Punishments, this Expedient was call'd in to their Assistance, in order to remove the Weight of this, and such other Testimonies of Scripture. Then, as to Mr. *W's* Scheme; pursued through all its Consequences, it leads one into such a Train of Thought, as one cares not to describe. It is certain and undoubted matter of fact, that the Christian World, induced by our Saviour's Promises, have all along hoped for *everlasting Life*. Shall I be allowed to ask, has this great *Teacher sent from God*, imposed upon his Followers? Shall they who *have trusted in him*, ever be *ashamed*? As they must be, when their Hopes and Expectations, raised and cherished by him, are thus defeated; and end, (properly and philosophically *end*,) in *nothing* *. Nay but, some one perhaps will

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say,

* O ye blest Scenes of *permanent* Delight!
Full, above Measure! lasting, beyond Bound!
Could you, so rich in Rapture, fear an End,
That ghastly Thought would drink up all your Joy,
And quite unparadise the Realms of Light.
The Complaint: or, Night-Thoughts. Night the First.

say, they have deceived *themselves*: They have taken his Words in a Sense, which he never intended. Now let any Man read the *New Testament*, and judge for himself; taking at the same time this Remark along with him, that according to the Law of Nature and Nations, *all Offers of Pardon are to be understood in the full Extent of the Words, without any secret Reserves or Limitations; unless they are plainly expressed* *. Were there no Words in the Language which our Saviour spoke, none in the Greek in which the New Testament was written, that answer to our *English* Words *long* and *lasting*? Why did not our Lord sometimes make use of these, on a Subject which required him to speak with great Exactness? Why did he always express himself in Words of *uncertain Meaning*? Or rather, in Words, which are *certainly* known to denote, on other occasions, the most real and proper Eternity? And this too, without any Caution against taking them in this *extensive Sense*; without any Intimation, that he desired to be understood *cum grano salis*. I know but one Reason of this Conduct, that any *consistent Christian* can give; and that I need not mention. Well then;

If the Word αἰώνιον in the Text before us, denote *the same Duration*, as applied both to the Punishment of the Wicked, and the Life of the Righteous; and if that Duration cannot be only *long* or *lasting* Duration, but Duration properly *everlasting*; then I have gain'd my point; that,

* Bishop Burnet's Exposition, Art. 22.

that, according to all Appearances upon the face of this remarkable Passage, the Wicked will neither be *utterly destroyed* in Hell, nor *delivered out of it*; but exist *for ever*, subject to, and sensible of, that *everlasting Punishment*, into which they are sentenced to depart at the Day of Judgment.

THO' I have been, perhaps, too prolix already upon this Article, and led into some Repetition, by repeated Objections; (see N^o XIV.) yet I shall not only hope for Pardon, but also for a little more Indulgence, while I attend Mr. *W.* a moment or two longer.

THE Moderns, he complains *, *have weakly understood a single αἰὼν, or Age, to be of equal*

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Duration

* P. 39. compared with P. 23.

These Phrases seem to me to be used promiscuously, as any equivalent Phrases may be. *Doxologies*, (which Mr. *W.* mentions, p. 61.) generally run in a full and lofty Style, as it is natural to expect they should do. But there is no invariable Rule for them; as will appear by what follows.

Doxologies which ascribe
Life, Glory, &c. to
God,

εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας.

Matt. vi. 13.

Rom. i. 25.

— ix. 5.

— xi. 36.

— xvi. 27.

2 Cor. xi. 31.

εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

Gal. i. 5.

Phil. iv. 20.

1 Tim. i. 17.

2 Tim. iv. 18.

Heb. xiii. 21.

1 Pet. iv. 11.

— v. 11.

Rev. i. 6. and 18.

— iv. 9, 10.

— v. 13, 14.

— vii. 12.

— x. 6.

— xi. 15.

— xv. 7.

N. B.

Duration with αἰῶνες, or even αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων, with Ages, or even Ages of Ages themselves : Whereas, he would have αἰὼν, render'd an Age ; and αἰῶνες, Ages ; and αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων, Ages of Ages ; as they properly signify, he says, in Scripture. This too would give

English

N. B. Some of these *Doxologies* are to God, some to Christ, and some jointly to both. Besides these, there are others which differ in Words from each of the Forms above. *Eph.* iii. 21. εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τῆ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰώνων. 1 *Tim.* vi. 16. τιμὴ καὶ κράτος αἰώνιον. 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος. *Jude* 25. εἰς πάντα τῆς αἰῶνας. So again, with regard to the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Christ, these Phrases are used promiscuously ; or rather the stronger Expressions denote what Mr. W. thinks will be of the shorter Duration ; as appears from the Texts following.

Kingdom of God.

Dan. iv. 3, 34.

— vii. 27.

— vi. 26.

Psal. xxix. 10.

Rev. iv. 9, 10.

— v. 13, 14.

Kingdom of Christ.

Dan. ii. 44.

— vii. 14, 18.

Luke i. 33.

Heb. i. 8.

Rev. i. 18.

— v. 13.

— xi. 15.

— xxii. 5.

N. B. As some of these appear to include the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of Christ too ; so others plainly include the Kingdom of Christ and *his Saints* ; and declare that this Kingdom shall endure εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ; *Dan.* vii. 18. *Rev.* xxii. 5. The same Phrase is applied by St. *John* to the Duration of the Punishments of the Wicked ; *Rev.* xiv. 11. xix. 3. xx. 10. The other New Testament Writers generally, I think, use the Word αἰῶνος, or εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ; which denotes the same Duration that the other does in St. *John*, and the same, as far as appears, in both Cases, as applied either to Rewards, or Punishments.

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English Readers a juster Notion of the proper Duration of such Periods, than the common English Versions convey to them. Let us give then a few Specimens of Translations in this way, in order to try how this Rule will hold. Matt. xxi. 19. and Mark xi. 14. Christ says to the barren Fig-tree, Let no Fruit grow on thee, henceforward εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, for an Age. John iv. 14. Whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall not thirst εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, for an Age; but the Water that I shall give, shall be in him a Well of Water springing up into Life for an Age, or lasting Life. Compare Chap. v. 24. vi. 35, 40, 47, 51, 54, 58, 68. x. 28. xi. 26. And many other Passages in St. John's Gospel: Which, according to the Rule above, should be translated lasting Life, or Life for an Age; and where our Saviour says in some of the Texts referred to, that his Sheep shall not perish, or they that believe in him shall not die, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, it should be render'd, for an Age. Now this, according to the common Faith of all Christians, would be so far from giving them a juster Notion of the Duration here intended, that it would give them a Notion utterly false in itself, and extremely derogatory to that great and eternal Salvation, of which the Son of God is become the Author unto all them that obey him. And according to Mr. W's own Scheme, this Absurdity would attend it; that αἰὼν, which with him denotes the shortest Period, (68, or 575, or according to his Sibylline Oracles, 400 or 500 Years,) is used of the Duration of the

Life and Reward of the Righteous, as much, or more than of the Duration of the Punishment of the Wicked; while yet he supposes *the Duration of the Punishment of the Wicked will be no greater, as compared with the Duration of the Happiness of the Good, than two or three are to a thousand* *. So that αἰών must denote a much longer Period than any of his Calculations of *an Age* amount to, even upon his own *Hypothesis*. Nay, as far as I can judge, it must denote a longer Duration than αἰῶνες, or αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων itself, sometimes does; since these are used to denote his *shorter Periods* of Punishment †; and the *other by itself*, the *long Duration* of Happiness. In short, all his Criticism upon this Head is arbitrary and groundless. Αἰών, in numberless places, denotes Eternity; and all its *Plurals*, and *Reduplications*, heap'd one upon another, can denote no more. They may add some Beauty or Strength to the Expression, but nothing at all, in this Case, to the Sense. Nor do I see any great occasion for Mr. W's Amendments of our modern Versions, (*viz. lasting* instead of *everlasting*,) even with regard to the *Ordinances* of the Law of *Moses*. *English* Readers, if they have *English* Understandings, will be led into no Mistakes. It is such Language in effect as they use every day; when they give and take in common Conversation, the Words *everlasting* and *for ever*, in a lax and improper Sense; knowing, at the same time, that the Words are capable of denoting, and do in other Cases denote, a real and proper Eternity.

* P. 135.

† Rev. xiv. 11. xix. 3. xx. 10.

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Eternity. It must be left to good Sense to distinguish the different Value of the Words, upon different Occasions; and that will be a sufficient Security against Imposition. After all, Mr. *W.* himself seems sensible that it may be objected to his Doctrine *, that *this Consumption of the Bodies of the Damned may be over in no very long time; and therefore seems not to come up to the terrible Descriptions and Representations of what is certainly αἰωνία κόλασις, or a long and lasting Punishment.* In return to which, he would have us consider the *doleful Condition* the Wicked are in, *during the intire intermediate State in Hades; reaching from Death, to the Day of Judgment; in general of many hundreds, or several thousands of Years.* But if these Years were ten thousand times ten thousand, what is that to the purpose? This *doleful Condition* in *Hades* before the Day of Judgment, is no Part of the αἰωνία κόλασις into which they go after it; and therefore, with regard to the *terrible Descriptions and Representations* of that *everlasting Punishment*, is not to be taken into Consideration at all.

No XXIII.

Matt. xxvi. 24. *Wo unto that Man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed: it had been good for that Man, if he had not been born.*

MR. *Whiston* says †, “ It appears by this
 “ Assertion of our Saviour’s, that some Mens
 “ Wickedness may be so great, that their
 “ Punishment in the other World will exceed
 “ all

* P. 140.

† P. 40.

“ all the Happiness they had enjoy’d in this
 “ Life.” Very tender! The Punishment of
 such Wretches as *Judas*, will be so great, that
 their Existence will be worse than Non-exist-
 ence; it will be a Curse to them, and they will
 have reason to wish that they had *never been*
born. But he proceeds;—“ Which implies thus
 “ much also, that such Men’s Sins shall *never*
 “ be forgiven, even in the World, or Age to
 “ come: As we have been already assured by
 “ our Saviour some Sins may be.” *May be*,
 what? *Forgiven in the World to come?* We
 firmly believe, upon the Authority of our Sa-
 viour, and his Apostles, that not only some
 Sins, but all Sins sincerely repented of in this
 World, will be forgiven in the *World to come*.
 But our Saviour no where *assures us*, that some
 Sins not repented of, and consequently not
 forgiven, in *this* World, will be forgiven in the
World to come. This is only a precarious Infe-
 rence, drawn from an Expression of our Sa-
 viour’s, which probably means no such thing;
 especially since it appears to be contrary to the
plain Doctrine of the New Testament in other
 Places, as well as to the whole Turn and Tenor
 of it: (Compare N^o XI.) Mr. *W.* goes on;
 “ Utter Destruction, or what we should call
 “ Annihilation, must therefore be the utmost
 “ Expectation of such enormous Sinners: un-
 “ less the Intimation the Prophet” (that is, the
Apocryphal) “ *Esdras* has given us of a Resur-
 “ rection after the second Death is over, may
 “ afford them some Glimpse of Comfort, after
 “ the

“ the several Ages of their Torments are over,
 “ tho’ not till those Torments have more
 “ than outbalanced all the Enjoyments of their
 “ whole sinful Life.” That they may soon do.
 What were the Enjoyments, for instance, of
Judas’s sinful Life? Such as have been out-
 balanced, in all probability, ten thousand times
 over already, by his *doleful Condition in Hades* :
 Yet his Punishment, properly so called, in *Ge-
 henna*, will not commence till the Day of Judg-
 ment. But this by the bye : It is not worth
 while to enquire, what *Expectations* of Annihi-
 lation, or what *Glimpses* of Comfort, with regard
 to another Resurrection, these enormous Sinners
 may have ; or what Conjectures, mere Con-
 jectures, other Persons may make concerning
 them. The Cause must be determined by
 Evidence. And according to the Evidence
 arising from the Constitution of Nature, and
 the Gospel of Jesus Christ, there appears to me
 no reason to expect either of these things. Par-
 ticularly with regard to the Text before us ;
 he that can infer from *these* Words of our Sa-
 viour, either *utter Destruction of Being*, or
Restoration to Happiness, is endued with a
 Faculty of *inferring*, which I have no desire to
 be master of. Because the Words *certainly*
may point out, (and naturally seem to do so,
 rather than otherwise,) a *third* State, distinct
 from the *other two* ; and more agreeable than
either of them, to other Testimonies of Scrip-
 ture.

N^o XXIV.

Mark iii. 29. *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never Forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal Damnation.*
See above N^o XI.

IF he hath *never Forgiveness*, as it appears from *Matt. xii. 31, 32*, he hath not, his Damnation must be *eternal*. Consequently, the Word αἰώνιος, and the Phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, here denote *Eternity*. Whether this *eternal Damnation* will be *eternal Destruction of Being*, or something else, we must learn from other Texts.

N^o XXV.

Mark iv. 25. *For he that hath, to him shall be given: And he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.*

HE that hath, (*viz.* any Increase or Improvement,) to him shall more be given; and he that hath not made any such Use and Improvement, of his original moral Endowments; from him, by the Appointment of God, even in the natural Consequences of things, they shall be taken away. This is a Truth, which in part, and as far as this World is concern'd, lies open to our Experience. The Seeds of Virtue, if not cultivated, decay; the moral Sense, and, in short, the *whole Sum* of our moral Powers, if not improved, are impaired; vicious Acts gradually weaken virtuous Principles and Sentiments,

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ments, and inveterate vicious Habits almost wholly destroy them. This we see; and therefore, if agreeably to our Lord's Declarations relating to this matter, such Neglect and Abuse of our moral Powers should at last be punish'd with an entire Deprivation of them; it is no more than the complete Execution of that Plan of Providence, in another State, which we see begun, and imperfectly carried on, in the present. Compare N^o XXI.

N^o XXVI.

Mark ix. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. *And if thy Hand offend thee, cut it off: It is better for thee to enter into Life maimed, than having two Hands, to go into Hell, into the Fire that never shall be quenched: where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thy Foot offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter halt into Life, than having two Feet, to be cast into Hell, into the Fire that never shall be quenched: where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And if thine Eye offend thee, pluck it out: It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one Eye, than having two Eyes to be cast into Hell-fire: where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.*

It is hard to say, how any Doctrine can be taught more plainly, than the Eternity of future Punishment is, in this Passage. Suppose it to be true, and that it was our Lord's Design to teach

teach it; how could he have done it in plainer Words, or in a more emphatical Manner? He seems here to explain his own Meaning of the other Phrases, which he sometimes uses upon this Subject. If Scruples be rais'd, however unjustly, about the Import and Extent of the word *αιώνος*, here nothing depends upon that Term. It rather appears from hence, that *that Term*, as applied to this Subject, must be understood in its full Extent: since it is here repeated, time after time, that the Fire is unquenchable, and the Worm never dies. And it is our Lord's manifest Design, to warn his Disciples to part with any thing in this World, however useful or dear to them, rather than expose themselves to the Danger of this State; because it is irretrievable. One would not, methinks, set aside the Evidence of so plain, and so strong, a Testimony of Scripture, upon so interesting and so important a Subject; without something of very considerable weight, on the other side, to overbalance it. Let us see then, what Engine Mr. *W.* employs to remove it; and whether he does it by fair Strength, or only by Artifice and Evasion. He allows, in the first place, that * "this
 " affecting Description of the Torments of Hell,
 " looks at first sight, liker their proper Eternity,
 " than almost any other in the whole Bible.
 " We have had the same Discourse of our
 " Saviour's indeed, already from St. *Matthew*
 " xviii. 8, 9. (see N^o XIV.) but not set down
 " so distinctly, nor under quite so terrible a
 I " Re-

“ Representation as here. However, it being
 “ directly taken from the last Verse of *Isaiab*,
 “ where it evidently belongs to a Judgment
 “ upon some wicked Men in this Life only,
 “ which is very far from *eternal*; and belonging
 “ to *dead Carcasses*, which can never be *eternal*
 “ *Ages* in consuming, either by *Worms* or *Fire*;
 “ and being join’d either with the *Sight*, or
 “ *Abhorrence* of those *Carcasses* by all *Flesh*
 “ *upon this Earth* only, ’tis most evident, that
 “ it does no way infer the proper Eternity of
 “ such Punishment, but rather the contrary.”

THE great Engine, we see, that is play’d
 against us, is the last Verse of *Isaiab*, which is
 this,—*And they shall go forth, and look upon*
the Carcasses of the Men that have transgressed
against me; for their Worm shall not die, nei-
ther shall their Fire be quenched, and they shall
be an abhorring unto all Flesh. Now supposing
 here every thing that Mr. *W.* supposes, that
this Judgment, and this Consumption of the dead
Carcasses, is in this Life only; and that *this*
Sight and Abhorrence of them, is upon *this*
Earth only; then indeed it is most evident, that
 we can no way infer the proper Eternity of *this*
Punishment, which *Isaiab* speaks of: But it is
 so far from being most evident, that it is not
 evident at all, that therefore we cannot infer
 the proper Eternity of the Punishment, which
 our Saviour describes in this passage of *St. Mark’s*
Gospel. For see how the Argument will run;
 Our Saviour in describing the Punishment of the
 Wicked

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Wicked in Hell, has taken some Images and Expressions from the last Verse of *Isaiah*: But *Isaiah* meant to describe by those Images and Expressions only a temporal Punishment, or a Judgment executed *upon this Earth only*; therefore we cannot infer from our Saviour's Description of the Punishment in Hell, *the proper Eternity of such Punishment*. No; what should hinder us? Are the Words capable of denoting a *proper Eternity*, when the Subject will bear, and the Occasion, and Context, lead to it? This is not deny'd. On the contrary, it is acknowledged, that this Description, at first sight, looks liker a proper Eternity, than almost any other in the Bible. But then it is taken from *Isaiah*, where it does *not* denote a proper Eternity. And how should it, according to Mr. *W*—'s own Account? Since the whole Scene of the Transaction, the *Judgment*, the *Consumption of the Carcasses*, the *Sight and Abhorrence* of them, is all to be *in this Life*, and *upon this Earth only*. If so, Reason and good Sense will lead every one to understand the Description in such a Sense, and such a Sense *only*, as the Subject described will admit of. But what is this to our Saviour's Description in *St. Mark*? He is plainly describing a *Judgment* which does *not belong to this Life*; a *Punishment*, which is *not* to be inflicted, in *this World*, or *upon this Earth*. If then our Lord could borrow from *Isaiah* a Description of a Punishment in *this World*, and apply it to the Punishments of *another World*; why might he not, (if the Words

Words will bear it,) intend to denote the *Eternity* of these Punishments, though the Punishment intended by *Isaiab* is only temporal? For it is plain, though the Description, or Representation, be *the same*; the Subject is *changed*: And *that*, after all, must be the Key to let us into the Meaning*. Our Saviour repeats the Description so often, and seems to lay such a stress upon it, that one can scarce forbear thinking he design'd to teach us; that, whatever may become of the *Worm* and the *Fire* mention'd by *Isaiab*, he was describing a Punishment, under those Images, which really and truly should never end: Here, indeed, *the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*. The matter, at last, will come to this *Dilemma*†; *Isaiab*

* Quem non terreat ista Repetitio, & illius poenæ Comminatio tam vehemens ore divino? Aug. De Civit. Dei. Lib. xxi. Cap. ix.

† N. B. The Ancients understand *Isaiab's* Words of Hell-torments. So St. Cyprian, Ed. Fell. p. 195. Ad Demetrianum. So Eusebius, Præparatio Evangel. Lib. xi. ad finem.

Ὁ σκόληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτήσει, καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβεσθήσεται, καὶ ἔσονται εἰς ὄρασιν πάσης σαρκί. Τῆρει δὲ ὡς καὶ ἡ Πλάτων συνάδων τούτοις, τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς εἰπὼν χωρήσειν εἰς Τάρταρον, ἐπιλέγει, ὅθεν οὐποτε ἐκβαλῶνται.

And so Jerom, on the Place: He does indeed speak of some *qui volunt supplicia aliquando finiri, licet post multa tempora*; and expresses some Hopes of this kind himself, with regard to Christians; but as to the Devil, and wicked atheistical Men, *who said in their Hearts, there is no God, credimus æterna tormenta*. However he plainly understands *Isaiab's* Words of Hell-torments. So do, amongst the Moderns, *Vitringa*, who confutes the jejune Interpretation of *Grotius*; Dr. *Clarke*, in his *Evidences of Natural*
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Isaiab in his last Verse is either describing the Punishment of Hell, or he is not. Upon the *first* Supposition, what Mr. *W.* has said above is all foreign to the purpose, being founded upon an intire Mistake. If, according to the *latter*, he is not describing the Punishments of Hell, but only some Judgment executed in this World; then it is plain, our Saviour and he are describing two very different sorts of Punishments; and therefore, though our Saviour's Representation may allude to his, or be taken from it, it is against all Reason to make *the one* the Rule and Measure of interpreting *the other*. Surely it is no unusual thing to allude to the Language of another Person, or to borrow Descriptions from him;

and Revealed Religion, p. 397. 7th Edit. And Dr. *Chapman*, in his *Eusebius*, Vol. II. N. B. Mr. *Whiston* quotes St. *Cyprian's* Words referr'd to above, in his 90 p. And though they contain as full and clear a Testimony for the Eternity of Hell-torments as can easily be given, yet he concludes his Remark upon them thus;—*But whether he (Cyprian) believed the Torments to be properly eternal, I do not certainly know.* That is, he will know nothing but what he has a mind to know, and makes for him. St. *Cyprian* does not only call them *æterna supplicia Gehennæ*, but says expressly, *Crēmabit addictos ardens semper Gehenna, & vivacibus Flammis vorax pœna; nec erit unde habere tormenta vel Requiem possint aliquando vel Finem.* *Servabuntur cum Corporibus suis Animæ infinitis Cruciatibus ad dolorem.* *Spectabitur illic à nobis semper, qui hic nos spectavit ad tempus: & in Persecutionibus factis oculorum crudelium brevis fructus, perpetua visione pensabitur.*—*Erit tunc sine fructu Pœnitentia, dolor pœnæ, inanis ploratio, & inefficax deprecatio.* In *æternam pœnam* fero credent, qui in vitam *æternam* credere noluerunt. In the next Page, *Cyprian* declares as clearly against Mr. *W.*'s Repentance in *Hades*, as he does here against his temporary Punishments in *Gehenna*.

him ; and use them, upon different Subjects, in a different and more extensive Sense. Our Saviour's Words must have some determinate Meaning of their own, and if that appear to be for the Eternity of the Punishment which he is representing, nothing that *Isaiab* has said can possibly make it otherwise.

BUT Mr. W—'s reasoning is not only inconclusive, but it also comes with the worse Grace from him, as it carries some Appearance of Inconsistency. He is here for setting aside a remarkable Testimony of our Saviour's for the Eternity of future Punishment, because it is express'd in the Language of *Isaiab*, originally intended to denote some Punishment only in this World. And yet from this same Language, alluding to this Text of *Isaiab*, *which originally related to nothing else but to the utter Destruction of the Enemies of God's Church, before the End of the World **, he would infer the Nature of Hell-torments, after the End of the World, and the Consumption of the Bodies of the Damned by Fire and Worms. Yet neither our Saviour in the passage before us, nor *Isaiab* in his last Verse, say one word about *the Consumption of their Bodies by Fire and Worms*; nor so much as mention *Worms* at all. They speak indeed of *one Worm, that dieth not*; which we have no more occasion to understand literally, for a real Worm; than to understand St. Paul's *Thorn in the Flesh*, literally for a real Thorn.

F 2

In

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In a word, so arbitrary and unreasonable is Mr. *W*—'s Behaviour in this Case, that he will not allow us to infer from the Texts what they plainly say, viz. *that the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*; (which, whatever the nature of the Punishment may be, plainly implies that the Duration of it is endless;) while he himself takes the liberty to infer from them plainly what they do *not* say; that is, the Consumption of the Bodies of the damn'd by Fire and Worms. See his 109 p. and compare the Quotation under N^o X. above.

N^o XXVII.

Mark ix. 49, 50. *For every one shall be salted with Fire, and every Sacrifice shall be salted with Salt. Salt is good: but if the Salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will you season it?*

IT would be endless to recite the different Interpretations of this Text. But supposing it to relate to our Subject at all, and that the *Fire* here mention'd, is the same with *that*, which is spoken of in the six preceeding Verses; the only Question will be, about the Import of the word *ἀλισθησεται*, *salted*. Not that the *Greek* Word has any Ambiguity in it; but * *Le Clerc* and some others seem to imagine, that our Saviour made use of one that had, and which signified either to be *salted*, or to be *consum'd*. But if by being *consum'd* they mean *totally destroy'd*, so as to cease to exist, they make our
Lord

* *Supplement to Dr. Hammond.*

Lord contradict all that he had been saying before, about the *never-dying Worm*, and the *Fire that shall never be quenched*. Others therefore suppose, that He here assigns the Reason of their endless Duration, by saying, that every such Victim of God's righteous Vengeance shall be *salted with Fire*. It is well known, that Salt is the Symbol of Perpetuity; and it is sometimes put synonymously with *Brimstone*, as *Deut. xxix. 23.* which in symbolical Language denotes, that the Fire it is join'd with, is not to be extinguish'd. A *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*, or a *Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone*, (*Rev. xix. 20. xx. 10.*) is a *Lake of perpetual Fire*. And when Hell-Fire is thus described, it evidently shews it to be an eternal Fire of Torment and Destruction; not in the Sense of utter Destruction of Being, but in a Sense exclusive of any Restoration, or Recovery *. But be this as it will, the Text before us is too obscure to build any Doctrine of Consequence upon; especially if that Doctrine be contrary to many clear Passages* of Scripture, or to the general Drift and Design of it; as that of Annihilation seems to be.

No XXVIII.

Mark xiv. 21. *Wo to that Man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed: good were it for that Man if he had never been born.* See No XXIII. No

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* If any one would see more on this Subject, he may consult *Daubuz* on *Rev. ix. 17.* *LANCASTER'S* symbolical Dictionary, under the Word *Salt*: *Dr. Berriman's* Sermon preached to the Religious Societies, 1738-9; on *Mark ix. 50.*

N^o XXIX.

Luke iii. 9. *And now also the Ax is laid unto the Root of the Trees : every Tree therefore which bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire.*

N^o XXX.

Ver. 17. *Whose Fan is in his Hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and will gather the Wheat into his Garner ; but the Chaff he will burn with Fire unquenchable. For these two Texts, see N^o I. and II.*

As to Mr. W—'s saying, that these Words are very much of a piece with those already cited from *Isaiah* ; (p. 41.) there appears to be little in it, either as to the Assertion itself, or the Consequence he would have drawn from it. See N^o XXVI.

N^o XXXI.

Luke viii. 18. *Take heed therefore how ye hear : for whosoever hath, to him shall be given ; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.*

WE have here the same Instruction convey'd to us, by the *Parable of the Sower* ; which we had before, from the *Parable of the Talents* : See N^o XXI. and compare N^o XXV. The present Life is the Season of Cultivation and Improvement. The Seed, which is the Word
of

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of God, is sown here; and must bring forth Fruit here, or else the Opportunity is lost for ever. Unfruitfulness will be punish'd with the Loss of the very Principle of Fertility. And a Power of which no proper Use has been made, during the whole proper Season of exerting that Power, will be taken away.

N^o XXXII.

Luke xii. 5. *But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.* See N^o X.

St. Matthew's Phrase there, *is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*, no more means utter Destruction, or Deprivation of Being, than St. Luke's here; *hath power to cast into Hell*.

N^o XXXIII.

Ver. 10. *But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.* See N^o XI. and XXIV.

N^o XXXIV.

Ver. 46. *The Lord of that Servant will come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and at an Hour when he is not ware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the Unbelievers.* See N^o XIX.

It is plain here from the whole Context, that none but they who are *ready* when their Lord

cometh, and open to him immediately, when he knocketh, are admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven. The rest are excluded, and have their portion with Hypocrites and Unbelievers. How unjustifiable then is the Conduct of those, who would persuade them, that they may, notwithstanding, have their portion, at last, with the Saints?

N^o XXXV.

Ver. 47, 48. *And that Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, shall be beaten with many Stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of Stripes, shall be beaten with few Stripes.*

THESE Words plainly teach us, that the Punishment of some Sinners will be *greater* than that of others. But this, it seems, will not satisfy Mr. *W.* since some will be beaten with *many*, and others with *few Stripes*, in the future World; this he * says “most naturally implies” that the Punishment of some of the Wicked “shall be much *longer* than of others.” Now if the New Testament taught this Doctrine, as plainly as it does the contrary; these Words if not *most naturally*, might naturally enough be thought to imply it. But if this be not the Case, and if the Words be as naturally capable of another Sense, more consistent with the Tenour of the New Testament; I leave the World to judge, what the Words *most naturally imply*. Surely one Sinner may be beaten with fewer Stripes,

* P. 108.

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Stripes, his Misery and Punishment may be less than another's; though the Duration of their Punishment be equal, and endless: Just as the Degrees of Glory and Happiness in Heaven may be various and different, though they be all of equal, and eternal Duration. Saying without Proof that this *equal Duration of Torments, is contrary to the most obvious Rules of Right and Justice in the World*; is doing nothing. We deny it; and assert that there is nothing contrary to Right and Justice, that they who are not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven, should be excluded out of it for ever. The Consequences of this Exclusion will be exactly *according to the different Demerits of Sinners*: so that *the Judge of all the Earth* will certainly *do right*.

N^o XXXVI.

Ver. 59. *I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last Mite.* See N^o IV. and XV. and *Theoph.* in loc.

N^o XXXVII.

Luke xiii. 27, 28. *But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.* See N^o VIII. IX. XX.

THIS Doctrine of the *final Exclusion* of the Wicked runs uniformly throughout the New Testament.

N^o

N^o XXXVIII.

Luke xiv. 34, 35. *Salt is good : but if the Salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the Land, nor yet for the Dunghil ; but Men cast it out. He that hath Ears to hear let him hear.*

If the Meaning of these Words be, that Men may become in a *moral Sense*, what Salt that hath lost its savour is, in a *natural* ; they are a clear Proof of the *utter moral Incapacity* of the Wicked to grow better : On which, as I conceive, the Doctrine of their eternal Punishment all along proceeds. And compar'd with *Matt. v. 13.* they teach us, that when the Disciples of Christ thus degenerate, they especially become *worthless*, and *thenceforth good for nothing*, but to be cast out.

N^o XXXIX.

Luke xvi. from ver. 23. to ver. 31. inclusive. *And in Hell he lift up his Eyes, being in Torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue ; for I am tormented in this Flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember, that thou in thy Lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this,*
between

between us and you there is a great Gulf fixed: So that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldst send him to my Father's House: for I have five Brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of Torment. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

THE plain Instruction that arises from this Parable, appears to me to be this; that our Fate in *another* Life depends upon our Conduct in *this*; and that there is no Alteration of the future State, as to the Nature and Kind of it; but be our portion Happiness, or Misery, it is what we must abide by: There is no passing from the one to the other. The rich Man's Requests, in his own behalf, and in behalf of his Brethren, are equally rejected. With regard to the first, he is reminded that he had received his good things already; which was in effect reminding him, (since there could be no Sin in the bare receiving them,) of his *Abuse* of them. And besides, there was an Obstacle in the very nature of the thing, which render'd his Request impossible

possible to be comply'd with. And as to his other Request, in behalf of his *five Brethren*; he is given to understand, that they have the proper means of Instruction in their Hands, the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets; which they ought to attend to, and obey. And that if they would not; a Messenger from the Dead would, as to the purposes of real Conversion, be equally useless and ineffectual. All this seems to me to imply very strongly, that our Fortunes are now depending; that this Life is our Probation; is furnish'd with Means sufficient for that purpose; and that if these be neglected, there is no other Resource which will serve as well, or be of any avail hereafter. This is the Light in which the Parable always appear'd to me; and in which it does still, notwithstanding the Colours with which Mr. *W.* has endeavour'd to disguise it. The rich Man being only in *Hades*, not in *Gehenna*, his Torment, Mr. *W.* says*, was only medicinal, and design'd for his Conversion and Salvation. But whence does this Consequence appear? The rich Man himself seems to know nothing of *this Design* of his Punishment. Nor does the benevolent Patriarch *Abraham* give him any Intimation of this kind: Though it would probably have been a greater Comfort and Relief to him, than a Drop of Water to cool his Tongue. But the *Circumstances of the rich Man*, Mr. *W.* says, agree with his being in *Hades*, in order to his Amendment. *Incorrigible Sinners are always represented as in Prison, in Hades, and close confin'd there till the Day of Judgment,*

* P. 120.

Judgment, without any positive Torments inflicted on them there : Whereas, he is represented as out of Prison, and in great Torment. That the rich Man is represented as in *Hades*, I grant ; but I still see no Proof of the Consequence ; that this Punishment was in order to his Amendment. Supposing that *incorrigible Sinners* are in Prison ; is not he in Prison ? No ; Mr. *W.* says, *he is represented as out of Prison*. But where, or what is this Representation ? Does his holding a Dialogue with *Abraham* imply that he is not *close confined* ? He seems to think that he is, and therefore would send *Lazarus* on his Errands. And he speaks of *this Flame*, and of *this Place of Torment*, as a Man naturally would do, that was confined to them. But here Mr. *W.* again takes his advantage : *He is represented in great torment*, whereas *incorrigible Sinners* have no *positive Torments* inflicted on them in *Hades*. *Incorrigible Sinners* are represented by him upon other occasions, in a very *doleful Condition in Hades* * ; and that is enough for our purpose. For the Parable says nothing about the Torments being *positive*, or *not positive* ; and there is no manner of necessity to interpret *the Flame* in which he says he is *tormented*, of a literal and real Fire. By the same Rule we must take all the rest literally ; and then *Abraham*, in the *separate State*, must have a Bosom ; *Lazarus* must literally lay his Head in it, and have a Finger too to dip in real Water ; and the rich Man himself, have Eyes and a Tongue. But Mr. *W.* observes farther, that *Abraham does not*
treat

* P. 140.

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treat him as a damned Wretch that deserved no Compassion, or Answer; but calls him Son, &c. Now we know so little of the Manner how separate Spirits, good and evil, treat one another, and can infer with so little Certainty any thing from it; that this Argument, perhaps, might safely enough be left to Mr. *W.* to make his best of it: *Et valeat, quantum valere potest.* However, we may recollect, that it was no part of *Abraham's* Business either to judge or condemn him: And since the very Nature and Design of the Parable required, that he should discourse with him; it is more suitable to *Abraham's* Character, as well as to our Lord's who spake the Parable, that it should be conducted with Decency and Decorum; than that *Abraham* should treat him as a damned Wretch, how much soever he might deserve it. As to his having been an Infidel, or *Sadducee*, in his life-time; I cannot admit *that* for any great *Extenuation* of his Guilt, tho' it seems to be suggested to this purpose. *In all likelihood, he had disbelieved all that was said by the Pharisees and Essens out of the Old Testament, concerning the Rewards and Punishments of the future World.* Any one may see for what purpose the *Pharisees* and *Essens* are brought upon the Stage; only to alleviate his Crime, as if it consisted in disbelieving only *their* Doctrine, or something that they taught, with, or without Reason, out of the Old Testament. Whereas the truth is, if there be any truth at all in the Fact*, he had

* Which probably there is not. For tho' Mr. *W.* says that the rich Man in all likelihood had been a *Sadducee*, it rather

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had disbelieved that prime Article of all Religion, the Rewards and Punishments of another Life; a Doctrine so independent of all Authority of *Pharisees* and *Essens*, that no Religion ever did, or ever can, subsist without it; and which being taken away, there is no sufficient Inducement left to *come to God*, in any religious Act at all. Well, but he *shews himself now thoroughly convinced of that pernicious Error*. Which is as small an Argument of his Virtue, as his Infidelity before was an Extenuation of his Guilt. *The Devils also believe, and tremble*. And who can persist in an Error, of which his very Existence is a Confutation? But he is also *become very compassionate to his own five Brethren; which is so far from a Character of infernal Obstinacy, and savage Cruelty, such as that of the incurably wicked may be supposed to be, that it looks liker a Preliminary to true Christian Charity, and to a real Repentance for his Barbarity towards Lazarus before **. There is

rather appears that he had been a *Pharisee*. Our Lord had been persuading his Hearers, to pursue and prefer the *True Riches*, and told them that they could *not serve God and Mammon*. *The Pharisees who were rich and covetous*, heard these things, and *derided him*. Our Saviour severely reproves them, *ver. 15.* and intimating to them that their Law, and external kind of Religion, which they valued themselves so much upon, was just expiring, and to be succeeded by one of greater Purity and Perfection; he then immediately adds the *Parable*; in which the *rich Man* is not accused of *Infidelity*, (for the Persons against whom it was design'd were all Believers,) but of *Luxury* and *Uncharitableness*; and his Brethren are to be persuaded not to *believe*, but to *repent*.

* Some have imagined that this Compassion to his Brethren, was at bottom only Compassion to himself. He had

is nothing in this, that I can see, more than is necessary to answer the Design of the Parable: He must intreat *Abraham* in behalf of his *Brethren*; and the more *heartily* he does this, the more reason have we to conclude, from his being refused, that no Importunities will prevail for extraordinary Favours, when the ordinary stated Methods of Providence, which were in themselves sufficient, have been neglected. To say all in a word; the whole Series of the Reasoning we have been here amused with, amounts to just nothing. From a Phrase, or Circumstance of a Parable, all rational Men agree, no
Consequence

had contributed by his Example and Influence to make them wicked, as they were; and was therefore afraid, that if they came into that *Place of Torment*, they might possibly prove *his* Tormentors. But there is no need of any Reason, but *the Reason of the Parable*. It being evidently our Lord's Design, in this Part of it, to shew, that Men have already sufficient Evidence and Inducements to *believe in God, and to obey him*, and that therefore *unreasonable Expectations* in Religion would not be gratified; this, I say, being his *Design*, it becomes necessary that the *rich Man* should make this extraordinary Request, and that *Abraham* should reject it. But his *real Compassion* to his Brethren is no more an Inference from this Request, than *Abraham's* Want of Benevolencē is, from his Refusal to comply with it.—I have taken no notice of Mr. *W's* Conjecture, that *the most terrible Part of this Description* was taken by our Saviour out of the Fourth Book of *Esdras*. The best Criticks allow, and it is evident to any one that reads it with Attention, that it is *later* than our Saviour's Time. The learned Dr. *Chapman* sets it a *hundred Years* after Christ, at least; (*Eusebius*, Vol. II. p. 88.) And *Du Pin*, after he has observ'd that it is full of Visions and Dreams, and several Errors, says 'tis doubtless a *Converted Jew* who penn'd it. *History of the Canon of the O. T.* p. 26. *English Edit.*

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Consequence is to be drawn, beyond the Scope and Design of it. But Mr. *W.* seems to have taken the quite contrary way. He has overlook'd the Design of this Parable, which is to teach us, that according to our good or ill Behaviour in this Life, will be our Condition in the other; and that, as far as appears, without Alteration, and without End; and instead thereof, has entertain'd us with some precarious Inferences, from the little Circumstances, and incidental Parts of the Parable; from which nothing, with any Certainty, can be concluded at all. As to what he adds, about the Gospel's being preached to the rich Man in *Hades*, and his being brought by that, and his severe Punishment, to true Repentance; it is a Point, I conceive, consider'd merely in itself, of very little Concern to any Man living. The *Person* and the *Preaching* being both perhaps imaginary; they are, in that respect, exactly suited to one another. But it is of the last importance to every Man, not to suffer himself to be *deceived with vain Words*, or vain Reasonings, so as to incur the Danger of coming into such *Place of Torment*, upon the vain Presumption of being deliver'd out of it. Compare *Theophylact. in loc.*

N^o XL.

Luke xvii. 34, 35, 36, 37. *I tell you in that Night there shall be two Men in one Bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two Women shall be grinding together; the one*
G *shall*

shall be taken, and the other left. Two Men shall be in the Field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, wheresoever the Body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together. See N^o XVIII.

MANY refer these Words to *the Destruction of Jerusalem*. If they relate to the *End of the World*, they shew the *righteous Distinction* which will then be made; agreeably to the whole Tenor of the New Testament. And our Lord's Answer in the 37th *Ver.* * which is a *proverbial Speech*, and has no relation to the *Eagles in the Roman Standards*, as some have imagined; shews the *Universality* of the Case; and that *every where, wheresoever* Circumstances are the same, the Event will be the same likewise.

N^o XLI.

Luke xix. 26. *For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath, shall be given: And from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. See N^o XXI. XXV. XXXI.*

N^o XLII.

John iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life: And he that believeth not the*

* Sententia proverbialis sumpta ex Jobo, 39. in fine Cap. Vid. Tremell. in Matt. xxiv. 28. See also Dr. Wall on the same Place: And Dr. Clarke's Sermon on the Text, in his XVIII Sermons, p. 36.

the Son, shall not see Life ; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.

N^o XLIII.

John v. 28, 29.—*The Hour is coming in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life ; and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.*

Life, in St. John's Language, denotes that eternal Life which God hath given to us in his Son ; not merely Existence, but Existence in a State of supreme Felicity. And agreeably to this, Death means, with him, not Non-existence or Destruction of Being ; but a State opposite to that of Happiness, a State of Misery and Condemnation. A wicked Infidelity brings us into this State of Condemnation, in the present Life ; he that believeth not, is condemned already, Ch. iii. 18. As on the contrary, he that beareth my Word, says our Lord, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation ; but is passed from Death unto Life ; Ch. v. 24. They who die in their Infidelity and their Sins, die, as they liv'd, in a State of Condemnation ; and there is no Alteration of this in Hades, that I can find, in St. John's Doctrine, (for then cometh the Night when no Man can work ;) so that when they come forth out of their Graves, it is unto the Resurrection of Damnation : a State of Condemnation as

before, only made more sensibly so by greater Degrees of Punishment. This appears to me to be a short Account of St. *John's* Doctrine, upon this Subject; who, if he has little directly concerning the Duration of future Punishments, seems every where to suppose that there is no Change of State, as to the Nature and Kind of it, after Death; and drops no Intimations either of utter Destruction of Being, or Restoration to Happiness.

No XLIV.

*John viii. 21. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your Sins: Whither I go, ye cannot come *.*

THE same Declaration, *Whither I go, ye cannot come*, is afterwards repeated to the Disciples, *Ch. xiii. 33.* But then it is explained to *Peter*, at the 36th Ver. of the same Chapter; *Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.* But there is no such Limitation with regard to the *Pharisees*, in the Text before us: Of them it is said, that they should *die in their Sins*, and not come whither Christ is gone, either now, or afterwards. Which implies that all others who die, like them, in their Sins, shall be excluded from the Presence of Christ.

No

* *Joh. x. 26. viii. 21, 24. Ye are none of my Sheep, ye shall die in your Sins: Which is the same as to say, Ye will never be forgiven, neither in this World, neither in the World to come.* Dr. Clarke's Sermon, of the Sin against the Holy Ghost. Vol. VI. p. 25.

N^o XLV.

John ix. 4. *I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is Day: The Night cometh, when no Man can work.*

THE *Night* here means, in all probability, the *Night of Death*; and then this Declaration of our Lord's will be of the same kind with that of Solomon, Eccles. ix. 10. *Whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave (in Hades) whither thou goest.* And in the same sense has that other Passage, Ch. xi. 3. usually been understood; *If the Tree fall toward the South, or toward the North; in the place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be.* How unreasonable then is it to expect, that a State thus represented by Solomon, and by him who was wiser than Solomon, should prove after all a Scene of Action? Compare Dr. Burnet de Statu Mort. & Resurgent. p. 97. Edit. 2.

N^o XLVI.

John xi. 9, 10. *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve Hours in the Day? If any Man walk in the Day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of this World. But if a Man walk in the Night, he stumbleth, because there is no Light in him.*

N^o XLVII.

John xii. 35, 36. *Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the Light with you:*

walk while ye have the Light, lest Darkneſs come upon you: For he that walketh in Darkneſs, knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have Light, believe in the Light, that ye may be the Children of Light.

THIS doubtleſs relates to our Lord himſelf; who, while he was in the World, was *the Light of the World*. But the general Reasoning in all theſe Paſſages ſeems to imply, that if Men will not *walk, or work, in the Day, or while they have the Light*; a Night, or Darkneſs will ſucceed, in which they cannot *walk*. If there was any reaching of the Goſpel in *Hades*, any Knowledge of Salvation by the Remiſſion of Sins given there; I ſee not why the Dead might not be ſaid to *have the Light*, and to *walk in the Day*, as well as the Living; which yet I think is never ſuppoſed. I know very well, a State of Ignorance and Corruption, ſuch as was that of the Heathen World before Chriſt, is repreſented in the Goſpel by the Images of *Darkneſs and the Shadow of Death*. And in this Senſe, *the Goſpel was preached to them that were dead*. But this rather ſuppoſes, than contradicts, what I now aim at. For the very Reason or Foundation of this Representation ſeems to be, that the State of the Dead is *perfectly and totally*, what *the other*, which is reſembled to it, is in *part only*, and to a *certain Degree*. The State of the Heathen World was *partly*, and to a *certain Degree*, a State of moral Inactivity, for
want

want of Light and Motives ; for want, in one word, of *the Knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of their Sins*. If this State then be compared to the State of them that are dead, what shall we infer from it ? Not surely that the Dead *have the Light, and walk in the Day ; or have the Knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of their Sins* preach'd to them ; but just the contrary. However, this is foreign to our point, at present ; which is not concerning the Repentance, or Non-repentance, of the Souls in *Hades* ; but the Duration of the Punishment of those, who will be condemned at the Day of Judgment ; when Death and *Hades* shall be no more.

Nº XLVII.

John xv. 2. *Every Branch in me that beareth not Fruit, he taketh away. Ver. 6. If a Man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a Branch, and is withered ; and Men gather them, and cast them into the Fire, and they burned.*

THESE Words are plain against the System of a Restoration ; and, by no means, imply that of utter Destruction. For the Force of the Comparison does not lie in this, that the Wicked are *burned*, that is *consumed*, in the Fire, as the fruitless Branches of a Vine-tree ; but in this, that both being *severed*, the one from the *natural*, the other from the *mystical* Vine, which is Christ ; and so render'd utterly incapable of bringing forth their respective

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Fruits, they are both entirely cast away, and totally rejected.

N^o XLVIII.

John xvii. 12.—*Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition: that the Scripture might be fulfilled.* Compare Ch. xviii. 9.

OUR Saviour could not mean ἀπόλειν in one place, or ἀπώλεσθαι in the other, in the Sense of Annihilation; for in that sense Judas, tho' the Son of Perdition, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, was not lost, or perished. It is usual in Scripture to stile Men the Sons, or Children, of any Thing or Person, in order to express any extraordinary Quality or Relation, which such Thing or Person is remarkable for, or may denote. Thus Judas here, and the Man of Sin mentioned 2 Thess. ii. 3. being for their great and wilful Wickedness, Vessels of Wrath fitted to Destruction, are each of them stiled the Son of Perdition. Thus the Profelyte, Matt. xxiii. 15, being render'd more signally corrupt by the Scribes and Pharisees, is stiled a Son of Gehenna, or Child of Hell. Thus wicked Men are called the Sons, or Children, of the Devil; the Faithful, the Sons, or Children, of Abraham; and good Men endeavouring to imitate the Example of God himself, the Sons, or Children of God; Matt. v. 45. The Expression, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, denotes no more than this other, so that the Scripture was fulfilled;

filled; assigning not the Cause, but the Event, as *Theophylact* observes upon the Place. The Scriptures by foretelling the Crime of *Judas*, imposed no Necessity of the Action; nor foretold any thing that would not have come to pass, tho' they had been silent. It is necessary to carry this always in mind, through this Debate, that no Man may think that *Judas**, or any other Person that shall be in the like Condemnation, is ordained to it by any absolute Decree of God; or necessitated by any Prophecies going before of him, to such Actions as lead to it; in any manner, or degree, inconsistent with the Liberty and free Choice of a moral Agent.

I HAVE now produced all the Texts in the four Gospels, which any way concern the Duration of Future Punishments: at least, I have not wilfully stifled any Evidence, or suppressed any Testimonies, out of prejudice, or favour, to one side, or another. If I have alledged any not directly pertinent to the Point in hand, (which

* Nec sane aliud denuntiant Prophetæ quàm quod ipsis etiam tacentibus futurum erat. *Calvin.* apud *Marlorat.* in loc. Denique *Judas* dicitur periisse, ut imple-retur Scriptura; non quasi perierit, quia Scriptura præ-dixerit; sed quia in eo fit impletum, quod prædictum erat Scripturis. Quod vulgo sic efferunt, ut sumi non finali-ter, sed consecutive. Nec enim *Judas* prodidit Christum, quia Scriptura prædixerat; sed prædixit Scriptura, quia Christum erat proditurus. Præviderat Deus proditurum, nisi impediret; decreverat vero permittere, & tam atrox facinus dirigere ad bonum generis humani. *Ger. Jo. Vossii* Harmonia Evangel. 4to, *Amstelodami* 1656. p. 166.

(which I am not conscious to myself of having done voluntarily,) it is only a little Labour lost; I desire no greater stress should be laid upon them than they will bear. If they are wholly foreign, as they cannot serve, so neither can they justly hurt, the Cause I defend; but must be consider'd as mere Ciphers in the Account. I may now proceed to examine the other Testimonies to the same purpose, which are to be met with in the rest of the Books of the New Testament; which will be the Subject of the next Chapter.

C H A P.

CHAPTER II.

Wherein the Testimonies of the other Books of the New Testament are produced.

N^o XLIX.

Acts i. 25.—*That he might go to his own Place.*

THERE can be no reasonable doubt but that these Words are spoken of Judas; and the *ὁ τόπος ὁ ἴδιος* is that proper Place which belong'd to him, as he is called *υἱὸς ἀπωλείας*, the Son of Perdition *. See Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, p. 233. From this Text Bishop Bull has asserted the Doctrine concerning the middle State of Happiness or Misery, allotted by God to every Man presently after Death, according as he has been good or bad in his past Life; and proved it to be inconsistent with the Popish Doctrine of Purgatory; as it is likewise with Mr. Whiston's. See Bull's Sermons, Vol. I. Ser. iii. p. 80.

N^o

* St. Ignatius says, every one shall depart unto his own (proper) Place, *εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τόπον*; (Epist. ad Magnes. Sect. V.) on which Bishop Pearson has this Note;—De Juda legimus, Act. i. 25. *πορευθῆναι εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον*. Unicuique sc. suus post mortem assignatus est locus. Sic apud Clem. Roman. Petrus dicitur abiisse *εἰς τὸν ὀφειλομένου τόπον τῆς δόξης*. Paulus autem *εἰς τὸν ἀγίου τόπον*. Vid. Ignat. Epist. Ed. Oxon. Annot. Pearsoni, p. 42.

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N^o L.

Rom. i. 18. *For the Wrath of God is reveal'd from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.*

N^o LI.

Ver. 32. *Who knowing the Judgment of God, (that they which commit such things are worthy of Death,)—*

N^o LII.

Ch. ii. 2. *We are sure that the Judgment of God is according to Truth, against them who commit such things.*

N^o LIII.

Ver. 5. — *After thy Hardness and impenitent Heart, treasurest up unto thy self Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God; Ver. 6. Who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.*

N^o LIV.

Ver. 8, 9. — *Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness; Indignation and Wrath; Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth evil.—*

Indignation and Wrath: that is, such Punishment as Men are apt to ascribe to Indignation and Wrath; but the Judgment of God proceeds

proceeds upon other Motives, and will be exactly according to Truth, and Justice. It is reveal'd against Unrighteousness; against such Unrighteousness, as Men themselves know * to be worthy of Death; and Men treasure it up to themselves by their Hardness and impenitent Hearts; so that when God renders it to them, he only renders to every Man according to his Deeds. There is no Sense in talking of eternal Punishments, as if they proceeded from any Passions in God. If that could be prov'd, it would be, possibly, the best presumptive Argument that has been offer'd, against their Eternity. For what is more changeable and arbitrary, than the Effects of Passion? But the Punishments of wicked Men in the future State, are all along represented, as founded upon the exactest Reason, and Truth, and Justice; and are therefore as immutable as these things themselves. And if it be right and reasonable, that these Punishments should continue for a Year, or even for a Day, it will be right and reasonable that they should continue for ever; the Objects still continuing the same, and all the Reasons of Punishment eternally subsisting. As little Reason is there to represent them, as Instances only of Power and Dominion. They may fall in as naturally with God's whole Scheme, and be as much

* I am aware of the various Reading in Ch. i. ver. 32; But it is nothing to my purpose, whether the Gentiles knew, or knew not, or only consider'd not, that such Sins were worthy of Death. All Christians, with whom only we are concern'd at present, know this; tho' they are too apt, perhaps, not sufficiently to consider it.

much according to the Constitution and Laws of Nature, as any ordinary Event, which happens regularly every day. The next time therefore Men object in this manner, they had better object against God's whole Scheme, against the original Plan, and universal Constitution of Providence; the thousandth Part of which is not comprehended by them, and which is the highest Insolence in any Mortal. But more of this, it may be, hereafter. I cannot but observe, in passing, that *αἰώνιος* in *ψ. 7.* must signify strictly *eternal*. For if they who *seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*, are put off only with *lasting Life* (how lasting soever,) they are put off with something *infinitely less* than they sought for, and may possibly think themselves disappointed.

No LV.

Ver. 12.—*Shall also perish without Law.*

N. B. Whatever the Word *ἀπολοῦνται* (*perish*) may here mean, it is spoken of Persons not concern'd in the Sanctions of the Gospel *.

No LVI.

Ch. vi. 21.—*The End of those things is Death.*

No LVII.

Ver. 23.—*The Wages of Sin is Death:—*

NOT merely the *first Death*, or the Dissolution of Body and Soul, attended with no other

Conse-

* See Dr. Clarke's Letter to Mr. Dodwell, p. 10. and 60. It is evidently synonymous to being *judged or condemned*, in the latter Part of the same Verse.

Consequences ; for that would not be an equal Retribution * ; but the *second Death* mention'd Rev. xxi. 8. As appears too by the Opposition it stands in, in both Verses, to *everlasting*, or *eternal Life*. It is a State of *eternal Condemnation* ; and though that Condemnation should at last end in utter Extinction of Being, (which we have no reason to believe, either from Scripture, or Philosophy,) it would still be inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Re-establishment, or Restoration, of impenitent Sinners. —“ For they forget the Commands of the living God, and live in Luxury and in vain Pleasures ;

* For all Men die, from the most virtuous to the most perfectly vicious Characters ; and so through all the intermediate Degrees. Besides, Death, as the positive Punishment, and Wages of Sin, can never be consider'd barely as the Separation of Soul and Body, (for that may be wish'd for, by good Men, as some Consolation ; and even run into by the wicked, as a Refuge ;) but that Separation, as inflicted by, and accompanied with, the Wrath of God. It is Death therefore with all its Consequences ; all the Consequences that may be fear'd from the Wrath of God ; or in Dr. Clarke's words, “ when the Death of the Body is the forerunner of that Death of the Soul, from which there is no hopes of Release, but the Wrath of God must abide on it for ever.” Vol. V. Ser. viii. p. 159. And p. 214. of the same Vol. he says, *Death* in the Old Testament, generally signifies that temporal *Death*, which is the Dissolution of the Body ; tho' when it is threatned as the Punishment of Sin, it prefigures and includes in it *eternal Death*. Which is also sometimes expressly threatned even in the *Old Testament* : —In the *New Testament*, *Death*, when 'tis threatned to Sinners, signifies almost always *eternal Death* ; the Gospel containing, as a more clear Discovery of Life and Immortality, so also a more express Revelation of the Wrath of God from Heaven, against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness of Men.

“ fures ; and are corrupted by this Evil-Angel,
 “ some of them *even* unto Death ; and others
 “ to a falling away. I replied ; I understand
 “ not what *you mean*, by *saying* unto Death, and
 “ to a falling away. Hear, says he : All those
 “ Sheep which thou sawest exceeding joyful,
 “ are such as have for ever departed from God,
 “ and given themselves up to the Lusts of this
 “ present time. To these therefore there is no
 “ Return, by Repentance, unto Life ; because
 “ that to their other Sins they have added this,
 “ that they have blasphemed the Name of the
 “ Lord. These kind of Men are ordain’d unto
 “ Death.” — “ But they that are dead, are
 “ utterly gone for ever.” *Shepherd of Hermas*,
 Archbishop *Wake’s* Version, Book III. Simil. 6.
 See N^o XCIII.

“ BUT the way of Darkneſs is crooked, and
 “ full of Curling. For it is the way of eternal
 “ Death, with Punishment ; in which they
 “ that walk meet thoſe things that deſtroy their
 “ own Souls *.” *St. Barnabas ; Wake’s* Version,
 p. 193. 4th Edit.

“ SEEING then all things have an End, there
 “ are theſe two indifferently ſet before us, Death
 “ and

* *St. Barnabas* does not ſay, *the way of eternal Death*
διὰ τιμωρίας, as if their Punishment at laſt would be the
 Cauſe of their Death, or ceaſing to be ; but *μετὰ τιμωρίας*,
 that is, ſuch a Death as is conſiſtent with Punishment.
 So the Conſtitutions, *Lib. i. Cap. 3.* θάνατος παρὰ θεῶν
 ἐπελεύσειαί σοι αἰώνιος, ἐν αἰσθήσει πικρῶς κολαζομένη :
Æterna mors tibi à Deo ſuperveniet, & acerbo ſenſus
Cruciatu punieris.

“ and Life : And every one shall depart unto
“ his proper Place.” *Ignatius to the Magne-*
sians : Wake ubi sup. p. 79.

Nº LVIII.

Ch. ix. 22.—*The Vessels of Wrath fitted to
Destruction.*

N. B. Nothing can be inferr'd from this
Text in favour of *Annihilation*. It does not
relate to the Retributions of the World to come ;
but to the Dispositions of Providence, and the
Judgments of God, with regard to Nations, or
People, in this World. It is one Instance,
amongst the rest, that the Scripture does not
use the word ἀπώλεια, (*Destruction*), in the
Philosophical Sense of *Annihilation*.

Nº LIX.

1 Cor. i. 18.—*The preaching of the Cross is to
them that perish, Foolishness : But unto us
which are saved, it is the Power of God.*

It is plain what is here meant by the word
perish : *Them that perish*, is explain'd by the
Opposition of—*us which are saved*. The former
are not saved, and therefore in that Sense they
perish, or are lost. It may not be amiss to set
down here, once for all, various Passages of the
New Testament, where this word is used ; in
order to discover, and, if we can, ascertain, its
Meaning.

Matt. ii. 13. *Herod will seek the Child (ἀπολέσαι) to destroy him.*

—v. 29, 30.—*that one of thy Members should perish, (ἀπόληται.)*

—vii. 13.—*the way that leadeth to Destruction, (ἀπώλειαν)*

—viii. 25. *Lord, save us ; we perish, (ἀπολύμεθα)*

—ix. 17.—*and the Bottles perish.*

—x. 6.—*the lost Sheep of the House of Israel: (ἀπολωλότα)*

—x. 28.—*able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell. See No X.*

—x. 39.—*shall lose it,—loseth his Life.*

—x. 42.—*shall not lose his Reward.*

—xii. 14.—*held a Council, how they might destroy him.*

—xv. 24.—*unto the lost Sheep—*

—xxi. 41. *He will destroy those wicked Men.*

Mark i. 24. *Art thou come to destroy us? To torment us, Matt. viii. 29.*

—ii. 22.—*the Bottles will be marred, (ἀπολούνται)*

—iii. 6.—*how they might destroy him.*

—iv. 38. *Carest thou not that we perish?*

—viii. 35.—*shall lose it,—lose his Life for my sake.*

—ix. 22. *Cast him into the Fire, and Waters, to destroy him.*

—x. 41.—*shall not lose his Reward (οὐ μὴ ἀπολέσῃ.)*

—xi. 18.—*sought how they might destroy him*
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Mark xii. 9. *He will—destroy the Husbandmen.*

Luke v. 37.—*the Bottles shall perish.*

— ix. 24.—*lose his Life, and v. 25. —lose himself, or be cast away. Where ἀπολέσας is explain'd by ζημιωθεῖς.*

— v. 56. —*is not come to destroy Mens Lives.—*

— xiii. 3, 5. *Ye shall all likewise perish.*

— v. 33. *A Prophet cannot perish out of Jerusalem.*

— xv. 4.—*lose one (viz. Sheep)—that which is lost. v. 6. Sheep which was lost. v. 8. lose one piece: v. 9. the piece which I had lost. v. 17. I perish with Hunger. v. 24. He was lost. v. 32. and was lost, (ἀπολωλώς)*

— xvii. 27, 29.—*the Flood—destroy'd them all: Fire and Brimstone, and destroyed them all. v. 33. shall lose his Life.*

— xix. 10.—*to seek and save that which was lost, (τὸ ἀπολωλός)*

— v. 47.—*sought to destroy him.*

— xxi. 18.—*not an Hair of your Head perish.*

John iii. 15, 16.—*should not perish, but have eternal Life.*

— vi. 12.—*that nothing be lost. v. 27. the Meat which perisheth. v. 39. I should lose nothing.*

— x. 10. *Thief cometh—to destroy. v. 28. They shall never perish.*

— xi. 50.—*that the whole Nation perish not.*

— xii. 25. *He that loveth his Life, shall lose it.*

— xvii. 12.—*none of them is lost. See No*

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John xviii. 9. *I have lost none.* ψ. 14.—*one Man should die for the People.* Compare Ch. xi. 50, 51. What is here ἀπολέσθαι, is there ἀποθάνη, and ἀποθνήσκειν.

Acts iii. 23.—*shall be destroyed* (ἐξολοθρευθήσεται) *from among the People.*

—v. 37.—*He also perished;* (viz. Judas of Galilee.)

—xxv. 16.—*to deliver any Man to die;* (εἰς ἀπώλειαν.)

Rom. ii. 12.—*shall perish without Law :* See N^o LV. Ch. ix. 22. N^o LVIII.

—xiv. 15. *Destroy not him with thy Meat;*—

1 Cor. v. 5.—*for the Destruction* (εἰς ὄλεθρον) *of the Flesh.*

—viii. 11.—*the weak Brother perish :*—

—x. 9.—*were destroyed of Serpents :* ψ. 10. *were destroyed of the Destroyer ;* a destroying Angel; and their Carcasses fell in the Wilderness: Heb. iii. 17. Compare Numb. xiv. 29, &c.

—xv. 18. *They which are fallen asleep—are perished.*

2 Cor. ii. 15.—*and in them that perish.*

—iv. 3.—*it is bid to them that are lost.* ψ. 9. *But not destroyed.*

2 Thess. ii. 3. *The Son of Perdition.* ψ. 10. *in them that perish.*

As for Ch. i. 9, see N^o LXIX.

1 Tim. vi. 9. See N^o LXXII. Heb. i. 11. *They (the Earth, and Heavens) shall perish.*

Heb. xi. 28. *He that destroyed the first-born,* (ὁ ὀλοθρεύων) ψ. 31. *the Harlot Rahab perished not.* Jam.

Jam. i. 11. *The Grace of the Fashion of it perisheth.*

—iv. 12. *Who is able to save and to destroy.*

See No LXXXI.

¹ Pet. i. 7.—*Gold that perisheth.*

² Pet. iii. 6. *The World—overflowed with Water, perished. v. 9. not willing that any should perish.*

² John vers. 8. *That we lose not those things.—*

Jude 5. *Afterward destroyed them that believed not. v. 11. And perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

Rev. ix. 11.—*the Angel of the bottomless Pit,—in the Greek Tongue hath his Name Apollyon: that is to say, a Destroyer; (Marg.)*

Ch. xvii. 8, 11. *The Beast—goeth into Perdition. That is, the great tyrannical Power, or Empire, represented by the Beast, will be destroy'd.*

FROM these Passages, where the word *ἀλ-
λυμαι*, or some of its Compounds or Deriva-
tives, is used, we may see plainly, that nothing
can be inferr'd, merely from the Use and Sense
of that word in the New Testament, in favour of
Annihilation. It may be ask'd, in which of the
Texts above, it has any such Import? Let them
be pointed out. I will point out one or two, in
which it is as likely to bear this Signification as in
any of the rest; and yet if Mr. *Whiston* admits it, he
must relinquish a considerable part of his Scheme.
John iii. 15, 16. If Annihilation be here meant,
it is plainly said that these Believers shall not be

annihilated; contrary to Mr. *W*—'s Insinuations, that even the Blessed in Heaven shall at last *be no more*. But it is far from being plain or certain, that *this* is the sense of the Word either here or in that other similar Text, *John* x. 28. Whatever the Word may mean in the mouth of a Philosopher, (as where *Socrates* says in *Plato*, ἀθάνατον ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ, καὶ ἐδέετο ἀπολλύσθαι,) this is not the Meaning of it in Scripture, or in other Writings which do not treat of Philosophical Subjects. We may (as Bishop *Pearson* observes) as well conclude that whosoever says he is *undone* (ὄλλυμαι, perii,) intends thereby that he shall *be no more*. On the *Creed*, p. 393.

No LX.

1 Cor. iii. 13, 15. *Every Man's work shall be made manifest. For the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by Fire; and the Fire shall try every Man's work, of what sort it is.—If any Man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer Loss: But he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by Fire.*

If any Man's work shall be burnt [by the Fire, at the Day of Judgment, says Mr. *W*.] *he shall suffer Loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by Fire.* [such as the rich Man underwent in *Hades*, *Luk*. xiv. 24.] p. 42.

ALL this is *gratis dictum*. *Grotius* and *Le Clerc* *, and others of great note, understand by *the*

* See *Poole's Synopsis*, and *Le Clerc's Supplement* to *Hammond*.

the Day, mention'd *ſ. 13*, not the *Day of Judgment*, but *Time*, which will discover what is true, and false; for Truth is the Daughter of Time. And then the *Fire* will be that stricter and more accurate *Examination* of Doctrines, which after some time Christians would set themselves to; and upon which the false would be rejected, and the true retain'd. This is certain, that some of the Apostle's Terms here made use of, must be interpreted figuratively. *Wood, Hay and Stubble* do not mean literally *Wood, Hay and Stubble*, (which may indeed be burnt by *Fire*,) but false Doctrines: And what Fire can burn them? But I insist not upon this: Allowing that by *the Day* is meant the Day of Judgment, and by *Fire*, real literal Fire; the meaning will only be, what every one grants, that the Day of Judgment will make a full Distinction between true Doctrines, and false. The true, like *Gold, Silver and precious Stones*, will abide the Trial; while the false will be destroy'd, and come to nothing, as *Wood, Hay and Stubble* are consumed by Fire. Thus the Man will *suffer loss*; the loss of his *Work* itself, and of the labour and pains he was at in building it. *He himself*, however, *shall be saved*. So that he is not one of those to whom our Lord will say, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, &c.* and consequently nothing can be inferr'd from his Case, concerning the Perpetuity, or Non-perpetuity, of Punishment *after* the Day of Judgment; in which he is not concern'd. But then, tho' he be saved at the Day of Judgment, yet

he is *saved so as by Fire*; "such," says Mr. W. "as the rich Man underwent in *Hades*, *Luk.* xvi. 24. That point has been consider'd already; see No XXXIX. But I shall add here the words of the great *Cudworth* *, that "to say that *incorporeal Substances ununited to Bodies*," (and such, for any thing Mr. W. has said to the contrary, are human Souls in the intermediate State,) "can be tormented with *Fire*, is as much as in us lieth, to expose *Christianity* and the Scripture, to the Scorn and Contempt of all *Philosophers*, and *Philosophick Wits*." But what then is the Meaning of *being saved, yet so, as by Fire*? Every one knows that it is a proverbial Phrase, used not only in Scripture, but in profane Authors, to signify *a narrow Escape out of a great Danger*. Instances sufficient of this may be seen, in *Archbbp. Tillotson's* Sermon on this very Text; who observes farther, that the *Particle* of Similitude (*ως*) plainly shews, that the Apostle did not intend an Escape out of the Fire *literally*, but such an Escape as Men make out of a House or Town that is on fire †. The Point is really too plain to bear a Dispute. And therefore Mr. W—'s Reasoning (if one may call it so,) upon the place, proceeds wholly upon a Mistake. *Lesser Sins*, and *greater Sins*, if they have been repented of, will be forgiven *in the World to come*, without Burning; the salutary Effects of which, Mr.

* *Intell. System*, p. 817.

† With difficulty, so as a Man escapes out of a House which is on fire. *Dr. Clarke's Sermons*, Vol. IX. p. 198.

Mr. *W.* seems to have too high an Opinion of. He makes some amends however, by owning, in effect, that the *Denial of Fundamentals by professed Christians*, may be then *irremissible*. As for his subjoining—*tho' not to be punish'd with endless Torments, but only with utter Consumption*: it is a bare Conjecture, contrary to the best Philosophy; and, by his own Confession, not directly asserted in any one Text of Scripture. See N^o X.

N^o LXI.

1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.—*The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Be not deceived; neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, &c. —shall inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Theophylact observes, that the Apostle here intimates, that there were some even then, who through false Notions of God's Goodness, or Philanthropy, were willing to persuade themselves that he would not *punish*. But here is as plain a Declaration as a few Words can make it, of the *Exclusion* of the Unrighteous, from the Kingdom of God. And it is extreme Folly and Presumption to expect any *After-admission* into it, when the Sentence is once passed, and *the Door is shut*: *Be not deceived.*

N^o LXI.

Ch. viii. 11.—*Through thy Knowledge shall the weak Brother perish?* See N^o LIX.

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Nº LXII.

2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.—*In them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the Saviour of Death unto Death; and to the other, the Saviour of Life unto Life.*

Nº LXIII.

Ch. iv. 3.—*If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*

Nº LXIV.

Gal. v. 21.—*As I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Compare Nº LXI.*

Nº LXV.

Ch. vi. 7, 8. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption. Parallel to Rom. viii. 13.—if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die. See Nº. LVII.*

Nº LXVI.

Ephes. v. 5. *For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, &c.—hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God. See Nº LXI, LXIV.*

Nº LXVII.

Phil. iii. 19. *Whose End is Destruction;—*

N^o LXVIII.

1 Theff. v. 3.—Then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child; and they shall not escape.

N^o LXIX.

2 Theff. i. 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.

WHICH Mr. Whiston renders thus;—Who shall have for Punishment ὀλεθρον αἰώνιον, a lasting Destruction, from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. And his Remark upon it is as follows: “ This Text is “ so far from affirming, as is commonly supposed, that the Wicked shall, at the last Day, “ be preserved in Being, in order to the enduring everlasting Torments, that it rather implies the direct contrary; that the flaming “ Fire into which they are to be cast at that “ Day, will, in some time, utterly consume “ them.” (Pag. 43.)

N o w, this Version and this Comment are, in my opinion, utterly inconsistent. If ὀλεθρος means *Annihilation*, αἰώνιος must mean *Everlasting*; for to talk of *lasting Annihilation* only, as distinguished from *everlasting*, is nonsense. If the *flaming Fire* into which the Wicked are to be cast, will *utterly consume them*, their *Destruction* will be not barely *lasting*, but *everlasting*.

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lasting. But to let this pass; what is it that Mr. *Whiston* grounds his Remark upon, that *this Text implies that the Wicked will be utterly consumed?* Is it upon the Import of the Word ὄλεθρος, (*Destruction?*) That Word here imports no such thing. As explained by *Matt.* xxv. 41, 46. it evidently means eternal Exclusion from Christ, and Departure into *everlasting Punishment.* There it is, *Depart from me* (ἀπ' ἐμοῦ) *ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire; ῥ. 46. into everlasting Punishment; (εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον.)* Here it is, *everlasting Destruction from the Presence* (ἀπὸ προσώπου) *of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power; or, from his glorious Power.* To say the truth, Mr. *W.* does not seem to lay the stress of the thing upon the Meaning of this Word at all, but upon the *flaming Fire**, mentioned ῥ. 8. But how does this *imply* that the Fire will *utterly consume them?* *Them* too! as if the Fire would utterly consume their whole Persons, Body and Soul: Which he allows in another place, (see N° X.) it is not capable of doing. Well, but the Fire *will utterly consume* their Bodies. Does *this Text*, or any Text, *imply* this? If it does, it can only be for this Reason, because it is of the nature of Fire to consume human Bodies. But can any one think seriously, that this Fire will

* *Theophylact* observes, that the *flaming Fire* may be joined either with the *taking vengeance*, and so relate to the Punishments in *Gehenna*; or to the Coming, or *Revelation* of Christ, which will be *in, or with, flaming Fire*: So *David*, Ps. xcvi. 3. (xcvii. 3.) *A Fire goeth before him, and burneth up his Enemies round about*: And *Daniel* vii. 10. *A fiery Stream issued, and came forth from before him.*

will have the same effect upon the Bodies of the Wicked after their Resurrection, which Fire has upon human Bodies now? What Absurdities will not this run us into? For if this be the Case, the *Fire into which they are to be cast*, will not only utterly consume them, in *some time*, but in a very little time. The present human Body would be utterly consumed by such *flaming Fire*, in a few Minutes. And will God raise up the Bodies of the Wicked, and re-unite them with their Souls, only that they may be *utterly consumed*, in a few Minutes *? Believe it who can! Besides, call you this *taking vengeance*? It is shewing favour. It is, in effect, reducing these Sinners back again from *Gebenna*, their proper Place of Punishment, into *Hades* the separate State; where they cannot be punished by such external Torments at all. Is it not infinitely more congruous to think, that the Union between Soul and Body, just re-establish'd, will continue; and the *whole* Person that sinned, be punished? Hear Mr. W. himself upon the Point;—"It deserves our

* But suppose, to prevent Dispute, we put *Hours*, or *Days*, instead of Minutes; the thing is still absurd. And if we argue from the Force and Influence which Fire has over human Bodies here, it cannot, possibly, be many Hours, or Days, in consuming them. Mr. W. sure will not take refuge in the poor Expedient of their Bodies being *miraculously preserved*; a Weight, with which he is often attempting to load the *common Opinion*. But to remove it, I take the liberty to acquaint him, once for all, that he is entirely mistaken. We wholly reject all arbitrary Acts, all miraculous Interpositions, of mere Power, either for *Destruction*, or *Preservation*,

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“our Remark farther,” (says he, *p.* 109,) “that the ancient Christians had little notion of directly punishing a separate Soul, or a Soul in another Vehicle or Body, for what the *Man*, composed of a Soul and present Body, had been guilty of. And did hardly think it consistent with Justice so to do.” Perhaps Mr. *W.* supposes, that the *Soul*, after this second Separation from the Body, will be punished no more. He says nothing about it, in the Passage before us; but rather seems to think that *Body* and *Soul* will both be *utterly consumed*: But in a Passage formerly quoted, (see N^o X.) he intimates, that as the Soul may not then be utterly destroyed, *it may remain capable of a second Resurrection, after the second Death is over.* Lay these things now together, and you see those *Terrors of the Lord* which are to *persuade Men*, reduced to little more, or no more, than what many have suffered in this World; *being burnt to death.* The Fire, (he adds *Worms* too, in the place referred to,) will *utterly consume* the Body, (and if *at all*, very *quickly*;

Preservation, in this Question; being fully conscious, that if we cannot defend our side of it, consistently with the Nature and Constitution of things, under the Laws of God’s ordinary Providence, we cannot defend it at all. But to the Point in hand, what I say is this; the *flaming Fire* here spoken of, must either *act* as Fire *acts* upon human Bodies now, or not. If it *does*, it will consume the Bodies almost as soon as they are cast into it; (which is absurd in Reason, and contrary to the Scripture-Representations of these future Torments;) if it does *not*, there is no Consequence in the Argument, that it will *utterly consume* the future Bodies, because Fire now consumes the present.

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quickly *;) and the Soul, without any farther Punishment, will be capable of a *second Resurrection*. How dare Men trifle thus, with the *Vengeance* of that God, who is himself a *consuming Fire*? Sure, some Mens Concern is only for the Wicked; and their Mercy confined to those, *whom God abhors*. The virtuous, and happy, and only valuable Part of God's rational Creation, are to be annihilated: Because, forsooth, *Coeternity* with God, (that is, if he means any thing to the purpose, *Eternity, à parte post*,) is *too vast and immense a thing to be expected*: (See p. 64.) The *curable* part of Mankind are to be *burnt*, (contrary to all Reason, Scripture, Philosophy and common Sense,) in *Hades*; some of them, it may be, for thousands of Years. But when we come to the Torments of the wicked in *Hell*, their *κόλασις αἰώνια* is to be, what?—It is but too plain from what I have said already, and I will not repeat it.

BUT there is one passage of Scripture, suggested by Mr. *W.* himself, which gives a decisive Blow to *his* Phantom of a *second Death*, and a *second Resurrection* †. St. *John*, in the xxth Chapter

* In no very long time, he himself seems to think there is reason to *suspect*; (p. 139, 140.) and see the Answer he makes to an Objection rising hence, from the intermediate Punishments in *Hades*, which are nothing to the Purpose; under N° XXII, towards the End.

† Cujus (Mortis) non ea vis est, ut injustas animas extinguat omnino, sed ut puniat in æternum. Eam poenam, secundam mortem nominamus; quæ est & ipsa perpetua, sicut & Immortalitas. Primam sic definimus;
mors

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Chapter of his *Revelation*, describes the general Resurrection, and general Judgment; *I saw*, says he, *the Dead, small and great, stand before God:—And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hades delivered up the Dead which were in them: And they were judged every Man according to their Works.* Immediately after he adds,—*And Death and Hades were (themselves) cast into the Lake of Fire: This is the second Death.* The meaning of which is, if Words have any meaning at all, that there shall no more be any such Event as *Death*, or the Separation of Soul and Body; nor any more, any such Place, or State, as that of *Hades*, or the separate Existence of Souls. These Things, represented here as Persons, must utterly cease to *act*, and to *be*; they shall never more affect Mankind, being themselves *cast into the Lake of Fire;—into the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone*, Ch. xxi. 8. And *this*, (it is expressly said in both places, *this*) *is the second Death.* Therefore, not any future Separation of Soul and Body; for the very Being, Power and Principle of Death, in that sense, is destroy'd; destroy'd for ever, in the Lake of perpetual Fire; and *Hades*, as the Consequence thereof, is destroy'd with it.

No

Mors est naturæ animantium dissolutio: vel ita; Mors est Corporis Animæque seductio. Secunda vero sic: Mors est æterni doloris Perpeffio. Vel ita: Mors est Animarum pro meritis ad æterna Supplicia damnatio. *Lactant.* L. ii. C. 12. Confer L. vii. C. 10, 11.

Infideles vero in ardenti stagno mittendi sunt; Sulphureo foetore concreto: quæ nuncupatur veracissime Mors secunda. *Cassiodorii Complexiones*, p. 228.

N^o LXX.

2 Theff. ii. 3.—*The Son of Perdition.* See
N^o XLVIII.

N^o LXXI.

Verf. 10.—*In them that perish.*

N. B. It is plain from the Context, (contrary to what has sometimes been inferr'd from it,) that the terrible Punishment here threaten'd, is not any arbitrary Act of God's Power upon the Hearts, or Understandings, of Men, *deceiving* them to their Destruction, without any regard to their previous Dispositions, or Conduct ; but it is a just Judgment, in the natural Consequences of things, upon wicked and corrupt Men, *who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in Unrighteousness.* For this Cause God shall send them *strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lye : That they all might be damned, (so that they will all be damn'd)* most justly, for their utter Aversion to Truth, and Virtue, wilfully, and wickedly, contracted by themselves. See Dr. Clarke's excellent Sermon on the Words, Vol. VIII. p. 89.

N^o LXXII.

1 Tim. vi. 9.—*Which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition.*

WITH these words Mr. W. has join'd part of the 19th Verse, (translated as he pleases, *viz. that the Good may lay hold of the lasting Life,*) in order to introduce the following Remark.

I

N. B.

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N. B. " Since we still find the Opposition
 " between the final State of the Wicked, and
 " the Righteous, to be this, To the former *utter*
 " *Destruction*, and to the latter a *lasting Life* ;"
 (that is, *utter Destruction* too, though at a vastly
 greater Distance of Time ;) " 'tis very hard that
 " our Paraphrases still suppose both to be equally
 " a *lasting Life*, or Duration." p. 43.

THE only thing here that looks like an Ar-
 gument, is *the Opposition* between the final State
 of the Wicked, and the Righteous. But this
Opposition rightly consider'd, lies with all its
 Weight against Mr. W—'s *Hypothesis*, instead
 of serving it. For the final State, or *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*
 of the Righteous, never means bare Existence, or
 Duration, (which in itself is neither a Punishment
 nor a Reward, but may become the Foundation
 of either ;) but *Happiness, everlasting Happiness*.
 The final State therefore of the Wicked, so far
 as this Argument of the *Opposition* holds, must
 be not *Non-existence*, or *utter Cessation of Being*
 but everlasting Misery. The truth is, *Being*
 and *Not-being* are philosophical Niceties, with
 which the Scripture has no Concern. The
Sanctions of God's Laws are Rewards and Pu-
 nishments, Happiness and Misery. *Utter De-*
struction puts an end to both ; and as applied to
 Mr. W—'s Scheme to both Parties, confounds
 all our Ideas of Right and Wrong. Whenever
 it comes, though after Millions of Millions of
 Ages, it must be a terrible Punishment to the
 Blessed in Heaven, as it deprives them, not
 merely of Existence, but of supreme Felicity.

Deprives them of it, when through their long and great Improvement in Virtue, and high Advancement in virtuous Happiness, they best deserve, and most exquisitely enjoy it. On the other hand, to the Wicked it will be no Punishment, supposing their Misery to out-balance their Happiness, (as of some, such as Judas, it certainly will;) but rather a Favour and Indulgence; as it will totally release them from those Torments, on the account of which, *it had been good for them, if they had never been born.* But to return to the Text before us; one need but read the Context to be satisfied, that St. Paul here uses the words ὀλεθροῦ and ἀπώλεια in the vulgar and moral Sense only, for *Ruin and Misery*; not at all in the philosophical Sense of *Annihilation*. Take his own words;—*They that will be rich, fall into Temptation, and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition. For the love of Money is the Root of all Evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many Sorrows.* The plain Meaning of which, in the mouth of any Moralist in the world, would be apprehended to be this, and this only; that they who are resolv'd to be rich, expose themselves to many Temptations, and cherish those sinful and destructive Affections which in the end will prove their Ruin. And the reason is, because *the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil*; and Men who act upon that Principle, in order to gain their Ends, will scrup-

ple to commit nothing: As some already out of love to this present World, and for filthy Lucre fake, have erred from the Faith, either apostatised from it, or corrupted it, and pierced themselves through with many Sorrows. But for the scriptural Import of the words ὁλεθρος and ἀπώλεια, see more under N^o LIX, and LXIX.

N^o LXXIII.

Heb. vi. 2.—*and of eternal Judgment.*

“ *Lasting Judgment*, says Mr. W. p. 43. or “ rather of that Judgment which is *for an Age*: “ [both on good and bad.] I own I know not what these last Words mean, unless, as is usual enough with him, he contradicts himself. In other places * he supposes the *Judgment*, or the

Re-
* P. 106, *one Age* only, it seems, is threatned to the wicked; while *an unlimited Number of the same Ages* is allotted to the good. P. 134, The portion of the righteous in Heaven, is to be *vastly longer* in Duration than that *single Age*, that is allotted for the Punishment of the wicked in Hell.—If I should suppose a *vast Disproportion* between the one and the other, the Reader is not to be surpris'd at it. And in the next page, this vast Disproportion is attempted to be fix'd; “ The Punishment of “ the wicked will be no greater, as compar'd with the “ Duration of the Happiness of the good, than *two* or “ *three* are to a *thousand*.” Now how can a Man that says this, talk of a Judgment *for an Age*, both on good and bad? Perhaps, after all, his Meaning is, that the Judgment here spoken of, is the *general Judgment*, or relates *both to good and bad*. But if this be what he would say, it is also what he should have proved.—*The Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgment*; says the Apostle: Now as the former of these is frequently used, in the New Testament, in a good Sense; so is the other, (*Judgment*,

Retribution consequent to the Judgment, (on the account of which the Judgment is here call'd αἰώνιος,) with regard to *the good*, to be of vastly longer Duration, than the Punishment of the wicked; and yet here the Judgment is but for an Age, it seems, both on good and bad. And so far he is in the right, the Judgment on both is of equal Duration, whether that be an Age, or Eternity. That it will not be the latter, at least as to *the bad*, he thinks is plain from the next Testimony, in this same Chapter; to which we now follow him.

Nº LXXIV.

Verf. 8. *But that which beareth Thorns and Briers, is rejected, and is nigh unto Cursing, whose End is to be burned.*

—"Not kept like Iron, or the like Metals melted, in the Furnace of Fire, and there abiding; but like *Briers and Thorns*, which are always utterly dissolved, and consumed by the Fire." P. 44.

I 3

WHAT

or eternal Judgment) used in an ill one. Mark iii. 29. He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal Damnation: (αἰωνίου κρίσεως.) In Heb. vi. 2. κριματὶ αἰωνίου. N. B. That αἰωνίου signifies eternal in the Text of St. Mark, see Nº XXIV. John v. 24.—shall not come into Condemnation, εἰς κρίσιν. ver. 29.—the Resurrection of Damnation, κρίσεως. And in the same sense, of Condemnation, is κρίσις, and κρίμα, used in many other places. Now if this be the Meaning of it in the Text before us, the Judgment spoken of, is not the general Judgment on both good and bad, but the eternal Judgment on the latter only.

WHAT an Instance have we here of his Care, (shall I say?) or his Criticism! It is plain he took the words, *whose End is to be burned*, to relate to the *Thorns and Briers*: and so because *Thorns and Briers* are, as he says, *utterly dissolv'd and consum'd by the Fire*, it is to be inferr'd, that the wicked will be so too. Which, by the bye, is no Consequence, tho' the Construction of the words were as he supposes. Arguments taken from Allusions and Comparisons, hold only in the main Point, and Design of them, and no farther. And the stress of the Comparison here, does not lie in the Circumstance of the *Thorns and Briers being utterly consum'd by the Fire*; but in their being *rejected*, and *burnt*; (whether to utter Consumption, or otherwise;) so the wicked will be *rejected*, and their End likewise *is to be burned*; but whether to utter *Extinction* of Being, this Text says nothing, and the very Nature of the thing reclaims. But, as I intimated at first, the *Burning* here does not relate to the *Thorns and Briers*, but to *the Earth which beareth them*. *The Earth, &c. 7. which bringeth forth Herbs*, is blessed; *but that which beareth Thorns and Briers, is rejected, and is nigh unto Cursing*, ἢς τὸ τέλος εἰς καῦσιν, *whose End, (or the End of which Earth,) is to be burned*.

No LXXV.

Heb. ix. 27.—*It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after this the Judgment.*

N. B.

N. B. Mr. *W.* has *two Deaths* ; for after the Resurrection and *the Judgment*, the wicked are to be *burnt to death*, or *eaten to death by Worms*; and the Soul, thus separated from the Body a *second time*, remains capable of *another Resurrection*. After which, I presume, there must be *another Judgment*; unless God finally disposes of these Creatures without any regard to their moral Character, and Behaviour; contrary to every Perfection of his Nature, and to all the Reasons of things.

N^o LXXVI.

Ch. x. 27. *But a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries.*

By which is not meant *totally consume* them ; the word does not imply *, nor will the Context admit of it. Here are strong Expressions to the contrary, which shew the Apostle had quite other Ideas in his head, than *that* of Annihilation. Φοβερά δέ τις εκδοχή κρίσεως, καὶ πυρὸς ζῆλος ; — Πόσω (δοκᾶτε) χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας ; — Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω ; — Κύριος κρινεῖ, — Φοβερόν τὸ ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς χεῖρας Θεοῦ ζώντος.

N^o LXXVIII.

Verf. 39. *Who draw back unto Perdition : Explain'd*

I 4

* Οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν φαγεῖν μέλλον, ἀλλ', ἐδίειν, αἰδιῶς δηλαδὴ. *Theoph.* in loc.

plain'd by the opposition, *the saving of the Soul*. Περιποίησις ψυχῆς est quod κατὰ δαί ψυχὴν dicitur Luc. xxi. 19. εὐρίσκειν, Matt. xvi. 25. σῶζεν, Marc. viii. 35. Luc. ix. 24. φυλάσσειν, Joh. xii. 25. Grotius in Poole.

N^o LXXIX.

Ch. xii. 29. *For our God is a consuming Fire.*

“ IN the same sense,” says Mr. *W.* p. 44. “ with the foregoing.” That is, with Ch. vi. 8. the Text in his Book immediately before this; and the Sense of which he mistook. See N^o LXXIV. The Sense of the Text before us, may be collected from what is said, under N^o LXXVI. It is κρίσις, τιμωρία, ἐκδίκησις, (*Judgment, Punishment, Vengeance*;) not Annihilation: A ridiculous Motive for an Apostle to urge, in order to induce Men to serve God *with Reverence and godly Fear.*

N^o LXXX.

James i. 15.—*Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth Death.* See N^o LVII.

N^o LXXXI.

Ch. iv. 12.—*Who is able to save, and to destroy*.* Able indeed, in the natural Sense to save, or preserve in Being, or to destroy that Being; but meant

* Verf. 11. *He that speaketh evil of his Brother, and judgeth his Brother,* (possibly, for using his Christian Liberty in things indifferent and innocent,) *speaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law;* (as if it were deficient, and blameable for allowing Men such Liberty:) *but if thou*

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meant here only in the *moral*. As is also the next Passage to be quoted; *viz.*

N^o LXXXII.

Ch. v. 20.—*He which converteth the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.*

N^o LXXXIII.

1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20. and Ch. iv. 6. These being the Texts of the New Testament, on which Mr. *Whiston* grounds his Doctrine of *Preaching and Repentance in Hades*, I reserve them till I come particularly to consider that Point. A Point, the more needful to be considered, as it is not a mere Speculation, but of great practical Importance. For if Men once begin to depend on I know not what *Preaching and Repentance after Death*, all the Arguments of *Preachers* here to bring them to *Repentance before it*, will avail little. It is, however, to be remember'd, that be this matter determin'd as it will, the Argument for the Eternity of Punishments after the Judgment, when *Hades* itself is over, stands as it did before.

N^o LXXXIV.

2 Pet. ii. 1.—*Who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, (αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας,) even denying*
the

thou judge the Law, thou art not a Doer of the Law, but a Judge. Which is absurd Behaviour, and acting contrary to the truth of the Case. There is one Law-giver, who is able to save, and to destroy; (whose Sentence alone is decisive, and by whose Determination we must stand, or fall;) who art thou that judgest another?

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the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction; (ταχινῶν ἀπώλειαν.)

WHATEVER *Destruction* be here intended, whether in *this* World, as the *Destruction* then impending on the *Jewish* Nation, or in *the World to come*; it cannot possibly, in either Case, mean Annihilation. Not in the *former*, 'tis plain, since no temporal *Destruction* extends to utter Extinction of being, but still leaves the wicked to be *reserved unto the Day of Judgment to be punished*; *ψ. 9.* Not in the *latter*; because then by threatening *swift Destruction*, instead of giving an edge to his Threatning, the Apostle disarms it of all its Terror. To Men in Misery, the *swifter* Annihilation is, the better. It deprives them of all Sense of Pain, and lays them down in utter Insensibility. I may only observe farther, that the Apostle speaks here, as if he thought that some Doctrines, as well as Practices, are *damnable*.

Nº LXXXV.

Vers. 3.—Whose Judgment now of a long time lingreth not, and their Damnation slumbreth not.

Their Damnation, ἡ ἀπώλεια αὐτῶν; the same Word which in *ψ. 1.* is render'd *Destruction*: And as there it is call'd *swift Destruction*, so here it is said *not to slumber*: And, *whose Judgment, (τὸ κρίμα,) lingreth not.* It is plain the same

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Destruction, Judgment, Damnation, is meant in both places; and for the same Reason, it cannot be Annihilation.

No LXXXVI.

Verf. 4.—*God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darknefs, to be reserved unto Judgment.*

Hell here does not mean *Gebenna*; for these sinning Angels are, as yet, only *reserved unto Judgment*: Therefore not judged already; nor consequently, consign'd over to that place of Punishment, which awaits them after the *Judgment*. But they are *cast down* from those bright Regions, which were τὸ ἴδιον οἰκὴν ἡμετέραν, *their own proper Habitation*, into the *Darknefs* of this *World*, Ephes. vi. 12. and kept in *Chains of Darknefs*, (though with liberty to go about seeking whom they may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8.) unto the *Judgment of the great Day*; Jude x. 6. For the Import and Propriety of the word ταπάρωσας, see *Windet De vita functorum Statu*, Sect. xiii. Which he thus concludes *, —Dicendum ergo Angelos prævaricatores a luculenta illa Regione, quam pridem incolebant, exulare: detinerique in obscuro caliginosoque Atmo-

* See Mr. *Mede's Works*, p. 31. who would have ταπάρωσας render'd, not, *cast down to Hell*, as if it were done already; but, having adjudged them to *Hell-torments*, be delivered them to be kept, or reserved, for *Chains of Darknefs at the Day of Judgment*: Or, ταπάρωσας, *casting down to Hell-ward*.

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Atmosphærio, perinde ac malefici in Carcere vinculis constricti: quoad post ultimum Judicium, fatalis illa hujusce mundi conflagratio cesserit: quæ illos simul cum impiis hominibus horribili ruina pessunditos æternum cruciabit. Compare Dr. *Thomas Smith's* Comment, in loc.

Nº LXXXVII.

Verf. 9. *To reserve the Unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished.*

THEY are reserved to the same Time, and to the same Condemnation, with the Angels, in the preceeding Article: *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: Matt. xxv. 41.* Yet Mr. *W.* says, “ this Text contains nothing that “ relates to the Duration of the Torments of “ Hell:” (p. 46.) The Text by *itself* implies this, that their State after the Day of Judgment, will be a State of Punishment, not of Insensibility; and compar’d with *other* Texts, it appears this State of Punishment will be eternal: See Nº XXII. What he farther says, about the *Time* when the Wicked are to be cast into Hell; viz. *not till the Day of Judgment*; is very true, and contradicted now by none, that I know of; unless it be himself. He has something in this very Book, which a great Genius perhaps may reconcile; but to meaner Mortals, it looks very like a Contradiction. Take his own Words, p. 85.—“ We may here take “ notice of a very remarkable point of Doctrine, “ with

“ with relation to the Nature and Duration of
 “ Hell-torments ; which though implied by
 “ many ancients Authors before, yet is here
 “ (*viz.* in *Tertullian*) plainer than in any of
 “ the rest, *viz.* That this unquenchable Fire
 “ is to arise from our own Earth, *in its pre-*
 “ *sent State ; and to burn up the Wicked while*
 “ *it is such an Earth, and no longer.* So that
 “ unless this first Earth be to last as long as its
 “ Creator lasts ; and there is never to be a *new*
 “ *Earth* at all : At least unless this first Earth
 “ be never *to flee away, so that no Place be*
 “ *found for it ;* both which Events yet St. *John*
 “ assures us are to come to pass before the Re-
 “ surrection, and the End of the general Judg-
 “ ment ; the Duration of Torments arising
 “ from this first Earth, cannot be *properly eter-*
 “ *nal, or coeternal* with its Creator.”

I HAVE read this Passage over several times,
 and it appears to me to say plainly, that the
 Wicked will be cast into Hell *before* the Day
 of Judgment. For if *this unquenchable Fire is*
to arise from our own Earth, in its present State ;
 and not only so, but also *to burn up the Wicked*
while it is such an Earth, and no longer : And
 if *this Earth be to flee away, so that no Place be*
found for it ; and there is *to be a new Earth ;*
before the Resurrection, and the End of the gene-
ral Judgment : The Consequence, I think,
 must be, that the Wicked must be cast into
 Hell *before* these grand Events, *the Resurrection*
and the Judgment ; or not at all. They cannot
 be

be cast into it, *after* them; for this *Hell* is to be *our own Earth*, and to continue only *while it is such an Earth, and no longer*; but this *Earth* is to *flee away*, and there is to be a *new Earth, before the Resurrection, and the End of the general Judgment*. What he means by the *End* of the general Judgment, I don't perhaps comprehend: But it is no matter. The Resurrection will be *prior* to the Judgment; for Men will not be *judged*, till they are *raised* again; (as he himself contends, p. 109;) and therefore if they are cast into Hell before the Resurrection, as his Reasoning above implies, they are cast into it also before the Judgment.

AGAIN, how does the Paragraph just recited agree with some other of his Opinions? According to the Principles laid down in his *Theory*, the general Conflagration is not to extend to the Dissolution or Destruction of the Earth, but only to the Alteration and Melioration of it; that it may be proper to receive those Saints, who at the first Resurrection are to enter, live and reign a thousand Years upon it. When these are compleated, comes the second Resurrection, the general Judgment, and the final Consummation of all things. And then the Earth will desert its present Seat and Station in the World, and be no longer found among the *Planetary Chorus*; that is, it will become a Comet. Now, it is in the last of these Periods, when the Earth is become a Comet, that it is, if ever, to be the place of the Punishment of the

the Wicked; according to Mr. W. himself, both in his *Astronomical Principles of Religion**, and in this Book on *Hell-torments*. How then can this be *before the Resurrection*, and while our Earth continues *such an Earth, and no longer*? I will only add, that St. John does by no means assure us, as he affirms, that this Earth will flee away, and that there will be a new Earth, before the Resurrection. The thing is absurd in itself; and St. John plainly relates the Resurrection, and the general Judgment, as antecedent in Order of Time, before he saw the new Heaven, and the new Earth: *Apoc. xx. 12, 13. xxi. 1.* It is true, he mentions the *fleeing away of the Earth and the Heaven*, before the Resurrection and the Judgment; but that does not imply that that Event will really come to pass before them. On the contrary, it is evident, *v. 13*, that the old Earth remains still; for *the Sea gives up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hades deliver up their Dead*, and are themselves cast into the Lake of Fire, and all the Wicked with them: And then appears the new Heaven, and the new Earth, for the first Heaven, and the first Earth were then really passed away; and there was no more Sea. So that tho' St. John tells us, *Ch. xx. 11*, that *the Earth and Heaven fled away, from the face of Him that sat on the Throne*; yet that cannot be understood as done immediately, but after the Resurrection, when the Sea and the Grave had deliver'd up their Dead, and they were judged. Then it is that

* *Astronom. Prin.* p. 156. on *Hell-torments*, p. 110.

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the Earth will desert its present Seat and Station in the World, and be no longer found among the Planetary Chorus. And to this Consummation of all things, when a final Period is to be put to the present place and use of this Earth, with its Atmosphere, does Mr. W. himself refer St. John's words, Ch. xx. 11, in his Astronomical Principles of Religion, p. 153. and in his Theory, Book iii. Ch. 5. at the End.

N^o LXXXVIII.

Verf. 12.—Made to be taken and destroyed,—and shall utterly perish in their own Corruption.

THE parallel place in St. Jude is, v. 10.—What they know naturally, as brute Beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves: Spoken plainly of moral Corruption; but for which, at last, they shall receive the Reward of Unrighteousness.

N^o LXXXIX.

Verf. 17.—To whom the Mist of Darknes is reserved for ever. See N^o XCIV.

N^o XC.

Ch. iii. 7. But the Heavens and the Earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto Fire against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men.

*“ THIS Text, Mr. W. says, p. 46, agrees
“ with the foregoing, (viz. N^o LXXXVII.)
“ as to the time when the positive Punishments
“ of*

“ of the wicked in Hell, are to begin, *viz.* at
 “ the Day of Judgment; and with many of
 “ the foregoing, in determining that Punish-
 “ ment, to be not a Continuation of their Lives
 “ in Misery for infinite Ages, but as ending in
 “ their utter Destruction, and Perdition.”

NEITHER this Text, nor any of the fore-
 going, *determine* what Mr. *W.* here asserts.
 The only Shadow of an Argument to this pur-
 pose, arises from a Word or two, which in
 Scripture and moral Discourses, means quite
 another thing. In the *sixth Verse* we are told,
 that *the old World, being overflowed with Water,*
perished; (*ἀπώλετο*) yet that *perishing* did not
 extend to *utter Destruction*, or Annihilation;
 but only to a great and general Change in *the*
World that then was. And as the World once
 perished by Water, so it must by Fire at the
 Conclusion of its present State. (See Mr.
Whiston's Theory, Book iii. Ch. 5. B. iv. Ch. 5.)
 Yet this second *perishing* will not extend, Mr.
W. tells us, to the intire Dissolution or Destruc-
 tion of the Earth, but only to the Alteration,
 Melioration, and peculiar Disposition thereof
 into a new State: (*Theory*, towards the End.)
 Why then must the word *Perdition*, (*ἀπολεία*)
 as applied in the 7th Verse to *ungodly Men*, be
 understood of *utter Destruction of Being*?
 Especially, since we know from Philosophy,
 that Fire cannot annihilate them; and from
 Scripture, that this *Day* of their Judgment, and
 of their Perdition, is so far from being the Day

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of their Annihilation, that it is the Day when they will be sent into everlasting Punishment.

Nº XCI.

Verf. 9.—*Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.*

Nº XCII.

Verf. 16.—*Which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest,—unto their own Destruction.*

Compare Nº LIX, LXXXIV, LXXXV, XC.

Nº XCIII.

1 John v. 16. *If any Man see his Brother sin a Sin which is not unto Death, he shall ask, and he shall give him Life for them that sin not unto Death; there is a Sin unto Death; I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

A Sin unto Death, ἀμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον, is the same sort of Phrase which this Apostle uses in his Gospel, Ch. xi. 4. *This Sickness is not unto Death, πρὸς θάνατον*. So that a Sickness unto Death, and a Sin unto Death, means, each in its respective way, something absolutely fatal; when no Medicines would avail in one Case, nor Prayers in the other: Not meaning the Prayers, accompanied with the Repentance of the Offender himself; for the *Sin unto Death* implies final Impenitence; whether that Sin be a Habit of any Sin persisted in to the last, or any particular Sin, such as the Blasphemy against

the Holy Ghost, or Apostasy from Christ, or the like; about which the best Interpreters are not agreed. It appears from *Hermas* that the Phrase was usual in *his*, and the Apostles, days; and therefore the Nature of this Sin was then, no doubt, well understood. And to speak my Sentiments, it seems clearly to me to mean, not a Habit of any Sin, (though *that* finally persisted in, will prove fatal,) but the particular Sin of renouncing Christianity, and blaspheming its divine Author; which too being done, not only after the Performance of his *own* Miracles, but *those* also of his Apostles, *with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven*, is in effect the same with the unpardonable Sin of Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. *Some of these*, says the Angel to *Hermas*, *are corrupted unto Death*, usque ad Mortem; *others to a Defection*, or *falling away*, usque ad Defectionem. *Hermas* here acquainting him that he did not understand the Distinction, *Hear then*, says his Instructor, “the Sheep which thou sawest exceeding joyful, are such as have for ever departed from God, and given themselves up to the Lusts of this present time. To these therefore there is no Return, by Repentance unto Life;” (why so? since the others who were *fallen away* had also given themselves up, he tells us, to *Pleasures and Delights*; and yet there was *Hope laid up for them in Repentance*; but the reason of this Difference immediately follows,—“To these therefore there is no Return, by Repentance unto Life;) *Because that to their other Sins they have added this*, that they have blas-

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“ *phemed the Name of the Lord.* * *These kind*
 “ *of Men are ordained unto Death.*” Here is,
 if I mistake not, St. *John’s Sin unto Death*;
 as well as St. *Paul’s wilful Sin after we have*
received the Knowledge of the Truth, Heb. x.
 26, 27. It is ridiculous to quote *Hermas*, as
 if he meant by *Death*, any thing like *Annibi-*
lation. “ *They that are dead, are utterly gone*
 “ *for ever †.*” (See Mr. *W.* p. 52.) Does not
 every one see by the whole tenour of his Dis-
 course, that he here means, *gone beyond Reco-*
very? Beyond all Return, by Repentance unto
Life? Beyond all Hopes, and all Possibility of
Pardon? On the other hand, they who were
 corrupted only to a *Defection*, or *falling away*,
 had *Hope laid up for them in Repentance*. De-
 fectio enim habet spem aliquam Redintegra-
 tionis; Mors vero perpetuo tenetur interitu.
Her. Past. Lib. 3. Simil. 6.

Nº XCIV.

Jude 6, 7, 13. *And the Angels which kept not*
their first Estate, but left their own Habi-
tation, he hath reserved in everlasting Chains
under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the
great Day. †. 7. *Even as Sodom and Go-*
morra, and the Cities about them in like
manner giving themselves over to Fornication,
and going after strange Flesh, are set forth
for

* The Life of such Men is Death. Gr.

† Ὁ δὲ θάνατος ἀπώλειαν ἔχει αἰώνιον. The Meaning
 is, the Consequence of such a Death, (as he calls the Life
 of such Men,) is, what the Scripture calls, everlasting De-
 struction.

of Future Punishment. 133

for an Example, suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire. §. 13.—To whom is reserved the Blackness of Darkness for ever.

THESE three Verses Mr. *W.* quotes together, and his Reflections upon them are as follow ; They are, he says, “ exceeding remarkable, and “ inform us plainly of two things of the greatest “ Consequence in our present Inquiry, *viz.* “ (1.) That the word *αἰδὶς*, which is generally “ supposed to be much more expressive of a “ proper Eternity, than *αἰών*, is yet used for “ a time limited, or for the Duration of the “ Age, or Ages, till the Day of Judgment, and “ no longer. (2.) That the *Conflagration* of “ *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and the Cities about “ them, because it utterly destroyed them, is “ filed the Vengeance *πυρὸς αἰώνιου*, of *lasting*, “ or, as we render it, *everlasting Fire* : Altho’ “ such Fire or Conflagration were quite over in “ no very long time, and burned no longer than “ the utter Destruction of those Cities required. “ These Verses are therefore the proper Key of “ such Language in the rest of the Holy Scrip- “ tures ; and a more authentick and satisfactory “ Key they are, than all the Schoolmen and “ Criticks of modern Ages can afford us.” (P. 47.)

IN the *first* of these Observations it is affirm’d, or implied, 1. That *αἰδὶς* is more expressive of a proper Eternity than *αἰών* ; and, 2. That it is used here for a limited time. Now sup-

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posing both these things to be true, what is the Consequence? Certainly this only, that αἰώνιος also may be used for a time limited; not that it always actually is so; which, we know, is contrary to Truth and Fact. Without entering into the comparative Strength and Value of the Words, it is undeniable that they are both expressive of a proper Eternity; and, unless we will deal arbitrarily with them, ought to be so understood, where the Sense of the Context, or the Subject of the Writer, does not limit them. The word αἰώνιος in the passage before us is thus limited, according to Mr. W. by the Sense, as these Chains are but to last *till the Day of Judgment*: Otherwise, it would denote Eternity. And so it is with αἰώνιος: When it is spoken of any thing that must end *before, or at, the Day of Judgment*, it is there plainly confin'd, by the Sense, to a limited Time; but what is this to the Signification of the same Word, when it is not so confin'd? As it plainly is not, when it is applied, (and it is applied equally,) to the Rewards, and Punishments, of Heaven, and Hell. But, 2. How does it appear that the word αἰώνιος is here used for a limited time? Is it any Consequence, that because these Angels *are reserved in Chains unto the Judgment of the great Day*, therefore the Chains will not be *everlasting*? What should ail them *? Are the Devils

* Or take Mr. Mede's Opinion, that σεσπαις in the parallel place of St. Peter, (N^o LXXXVI.) and δεσμοις here, are put for εἰς σεσπαις, and εἰς δεσμοις; and then the Con-

Devils then to be set at liberty? Or confin'd more closely? If the latter, why may not the Chains be *everlasting*? And what are these Chains? *Metaphoricè significant Dei Potentiam, qua, tanquam vinculis quibusdam æternis, id est, nunquam solvendis, eos constringit ac detinet, ne liberi ferantur quò volunt*: says *Estius* on the Place. If then Mr. *W—*'s Premises be false, what becomes of his Conclusion? Or granting one of them, viz. the superior Claim of αἰδίοϑ, the other, αἰώνιοϑ, still keeps its ground, and is just where it was before: For αἰδίοϑ here signifies *everlasting*, and is a strong proof of the Eternity of the Punishment of the Devil and his Angels. *Cum perpetuorum vinculorum heic mentio fiat una cum imminente die Judicii, rectè hinc Theologi conficiunt, malis Geniis nullam Redemptionis spem superesse. Wolfii Curæ Phil. & Crit.*

MR. *W—*'s second Observation, which is on §. 7. asserts, or implies these three Things;
1. That the Fire of Sodom and Gomorrha is here stiled the Vengeance πυρὸς αἰώνιοϑ, as we render it, *of eternal Fire*. 2. That it is so stiled, for this Reason, *because it utterly destroyed them*. 3. That this Fire was quite over in no very long time, and burned no longer than the utter Destruction of those Cities required.

K 4

Now,

Construction will be, not that the evil Angels were now already deliver'd to Chains of Darkneſs, or *everlasting Chains*, but reserved for them at the Day of Judgment. *Works, p. 31.*

Now, as Mr. *W.* lays so great a Stress on these Verses, as to make them the Key of such Language in the rest of the Holy Scriptures; a more authentick and satisfactory Key, than all the Schoolmen and Criticks can afford; *these* Particulars, as well as *those* under the former Article, none of which are at least self-evidently true, ought to have been clearly proved. But no Proof is attempted; we have Mr. *W.*'s bare Assertions; of which one is, That the Fire of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* is here stiled *the Vengeance* $\piυρὸς αἰωνίυς$. But had he not too much despised the Criticks to have consulted them, he would have found that this Point is far from being certain. Some of them join the words $\piυρὸς αἰωνίυς$ with $δᾱγμα$, not $δῖκην$, and so make the Version thus, *are set forth for Example of eternal Fire, suffering Punishment, or Vengeance*. And so *Cassiodorus*, no modern, but an ancient Critick, seems plainly to understand it: *Sodomam quoque, & Gomorram, & finitimas Civitates, quæ graviter deliquerunt, obscena Carnis vitia diligentes, consumptas perhibet, in exemplo ignis æterni*. But should this Sense be rejected, there is another, approv'd by no less Men than *Grotius*, and *Mede* *, and *Wall*; and that is, that $\piυρὸς αἰωνίυς δῖκην ὑπέχυσαι$, or $\υπερέχυσαι$, should be render'd, *suffering a Resemblance of eternal Fire*; as $\ποταμὺς δῖκην$, *like a River*, &c. I will mention no more Interpretations; which, however, might easily be done; as all

Inter-

* *Mede's Works*, p. 1118. *Wall's Annot.* p. 367.

Interpreters have been sensible that αἰώνιον πυρ in all other places of the New Testament means the *Fire of Hell*, it was not very natural for them to suppose that St. Jude uses it of the *Fire of Sodom and Gomorrha*. But be it for once that he does ; why should the pompous Style of St. Jude, whose bold oriental Figures, and Phrases, are copied from some ancients Jewish Writer, and perhaps in this very Particular *, be made the Key to the Language of the rest of the New Testament ? The plain correct Language, for instance, of our Saviour himself in the xxv Matt. v. 41, 46 ? Where he declares what will be the Sentence at the last Day, on incorrigibly wicked men, and the Consequence of that Sentence, in the plainest and most positive Terms. Surely there is no Reason or Consequence in saying, that because αἰώνιον is applied by a pompous figurative Writer to the Fire of *Sodom*, and must then necessarily be taken in a limited Sense ; therefore it must always be taken in such a Sense, when applied by our Lord himself to the *Fire of Hell*, declar'd by his own repeated Asseverations to be *unquenchable*.

MR. W—'s next Assertion is, that this Fire of *Sodom and Gomorrha* is stiled αἰώνιον for this Reason, *because it utterly destroyed them*. And may every Fire then that *utterly destroys* its Subject, be so stiled, how short a time soever it lasts ? I should rather think that αἰώνιον expresses some

* See Bp. Sherlock's Dissertation on the Authority of the second Epistle of St. Peter.

some considerable Duration, * either lasting, or everlasting; and that it does so here, supposing it to relate to the Fire of *Sodom*, we have good Reason to conclude from all Antiquity, sacred and profane. For, in the next place, which is contrary to Mr. *W*—'s *third* Assertion, it is not true that the Fire was *quite over in no very long time, and burned no longer than the utter Destruction of those Cities required*. It appears from the Authorities collected by many learned Men *, that the Fire was not *quite over* in many Ages: Not in St. *Jude*'s own time, as may be fairly inferr'd from *Strabo*, and *Philo* the Jew, who were Contemporaries with him, or very little before him. But what need of other Witnesses, when it is plain that St. *Jude* himself speaks of it as not *quite over*, but still enduring †? For this reason therefore he calls it, if he does call it, *ωὕρ αἰώνιον*; because it had lasted for above two thousand Years.

MR.

* *Grotius* De Verit. Rel. Christ. Lib. i. Sect. 16. Revelation examin'd with Candour, Vol. 2. Dif. vi. *Saurin*'s Dissertations on the Books of Moses, *English Edit.* p. 155.

† See Dr. *Hammond* on the Place. He understands by *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, and the Cities about them, not the Walls and Buildings, but the *Inhabitants* of those Cities; and agreeably, the *Fire they suffer*, is the *eternal Fire of Hell*. But this Opinion has its Difficulties, which cannot well be removed. However, it shews how sensible that learned Writer was, that St. *Jude* speaks of this Fire as then subsisting.

Dicitur αἰώνιος ☉ Ignis qui per tot Secula ex bituminosa Materia arsit, & forte etiamnum ardet.

‡ *Clerici* Dissert. de Sodomæ, &c. Subversione.

MR. W. makes no Remark on *ψ. 13.* but only renders *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, as usual, for an Age: To whom is reserved the Blackness of Darkness for an Age. This Blackness of Darkness, according to him, (see N^o IX.) is not in *Gebenna*, but in *Hades*. And then indeed it will not endure for ever; tho' it may be of a much longer Duration than one of Mr. W—'s Ages. But who are they, whom the Apostle threatens with this Blackness of Darkness in *Hades*? The Curable, or the Incurable part of Mankind? The Curable part, Mr. W. tells us, (see N^o III.) are to be corrected by the Eruption of the Fire or Flame of *Gebenna*, into such parts of *Hades* as they are forced into, before the Day of Judgment. This Blackness of Darkness therefore can be no Description of their State and Condition; for "we have no Notion of Fire and Flame without Light, tho' it be never so dismal." Instead of Blackness of Darkness, the Apostle should have threaten'd such as these, with the Eruption of flaming Fire. And as to the Incurable, it seems utterly incredible that he should threaten them with Punishments in *Hades*, rather than with those into which they are to depart at the Day of Judgment. They are to have no positive Torments inflicted on them in *Hades*; (see Mr. W—'s Book, p. 120.) no Punishment, but what arises from within, from their own Consciences, and fearful Expectations. The proper Punishment reserved for them is in *Gebenna*; and this therefore, no doubt, it is, that St. Jude here de-

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denounces against them. So that there being nothing here, in the Sense or Context, to limit the Meaning of *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, that Phrase ought in all reason to be understood in its most extensive Sense, agreeably to the other Declarations of Scripture relating to this matter. I will only add here to what I have observed in other places, that tho' *Adam* lived *nine hundred and thirty Years*, (Gen. v. 5.) which is several of Mr. *W*—'s Ages, yet he did not live *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, but was driven from the *Tree of Life*, lest he should eat, and live *for ever*: See Gen. iii. 22.

Nº XCV.

Apoc. xiv. 10, 11. *The same shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without Mixture, into the Cup of his Indignation; and he shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone, in the Presence of the Holy Angels, and in the Presence of the Lamb: And the Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever:—(εἰς αἰῶνας αἰώνων.)*

MR. *W*. has several Expedients to prevent this Passage from hurting his *Hypothesis*. First he observes, that “these are the first Places we
“ have met with relating, as is suppos'd, to the
“ Torments of Hell, which mention *αἰῶνες τῶν*
“ *αἰώνων*, *Ages of Ages*; or even barely *αἰῶνες*
“ [or *Ages*, in the plural number:] i. e. several
“ of such Ages succeeding one another.” (p. 48.)

Now

Now all that there is in this matter, I conceive, is this. The other New-Testament Writers express the Duration both of Happiness in Heaven, and Punishment in Hell, generally, if not always, by *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, or the like, in the Singular Number. St. John in his *Revelation* raises his Style; and as he uses the Plural, and its Reduplication, (*αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων*) with regard to the Kingdom of Heaven, so he does likewise with reference to the Torments of Hell. So that as far as the mere Terms are concern'd, we have all the reason in the world to think, that the two States will be of equal Duration. Well, but "the Phrases are very far from denoting a proper Eternity." If he means that they *never* denote a proper Eternity, (*à parte post*,) the Assertion is evidently false. Even the Phrase in the Singular Number does so, in numberless Places. If he means that they don't denote a proper Eternity in *these Places*, it is, to say no more of it at present, begging the Question. Next he offers a "Conjecture, that the Smoke of such their Torment may ascend up in *Terrorem*, longer than the Torments themselves of particular Offenders continue; and that the Fire and the Smoke thereto belonging, may be the common Place of Torment for Sinners, in different Ages and Periods of the World, one after another." It is not worth while to ask, *What Ages and Periods*, and of *what World*, since this World will be ended? The Conjecture is of no more weight than

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than a Dream; and if he had attended to his own Texts, he would have seen *there is no room* for it. The Context plainly supposes that *these particular Offenders themselves* still exist in these Torments:—*The Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: And they have no rest Day nor Night*,—We readily admit, nay we contend for the Observation he quotes from Sir *Isaac Newton*, “That the Degree and Duration of the Torments of these degenerate and antichristian People, will be no other, than what will be approved of by those Angels, who had ever laboured for their Salvation; and that Lamb who had redeemed them with his own most precious Blood.” This is the great Aggravation of their Guilt; and renders them *worthy of much sorer Punishment*; because they had *trod under foot the Son of God, and had counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and had done despite unto the Spirit of Grace: Heb. x. 29.* Surely the Lamb who adjudges them to these Torments, will approve both of their *Degree and Duration*; and the Holy Angels will not only approve, but applaud his Justice. Mr. *W.* next intimates, that he is not yet fully satisfied, that *these Words relate to the Torments of Hell**. “They belong to the
“Worshippers

* Dr. *Clarke* understands them of the *Torments of Hell*, and makes a Remark upon them to the same purpose with Sir *Isaac Newton*’s. “Our Saviour himself, who loved us, &c. even *He* shall say, to those who impenitently reject his gracious Offers of Life, *Depart from me, ye Cursed,*

of Future Punishment. 143

" Worshippers of the Antichristian Beast only.
 " —They are very much the same with those,
 " *Ifai.* xxxiv. 9, 10. already set down, p. 25.
 " *prius*,—they may be thought directly paral-
 " lel to them, and to belong to the Vengeance
 " to be taken on the Enemies of God's People
 " at the Battle of *Harmageddon* only. Which
 " surely is to be upon this Earth, and not in
 " *Gebenna*, or *Hell*. I determine nothing, till
 " some farther light appear; as it will present-
 " ly." (p. 49.) This *Light appears* to him in
 the very next Page; where he owns, notwith-
 standing what he here says, (that this *Vengeance*
to be taken on the Enemies of God's People, is to
be upon this Earth, and not in Gebenna, or Hell,)
 notwithstanding this, I say, he owns, that "what-
 " ever Preludes to this dreadful Punishment
 " there may be *upon this Earth*, at the coming
 " on of this Fire and Brimstone, at the great
 " Day; yet will the up-shot of all be no other
 " than the *Fire of Gebenna or Hell*;—and
 " that

Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his
Angels; Matt. xxv. 41. And, In the presence of the Holy
Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, who assuredly
can take no pleasure in beholding any Punishment but
what is necessary, shall they be tormented with Fire and
Brimstone; Rev. xiv. 10"

Sermons Vol. X. p. 356, 357.

So also St. *Cyprian*,—In *Apocalypsi* quoque legimus, &c.
 And then reciting the Words, concluding with those in
 the eleventh Verse,—*Nec habebunt Requiem die ac nocte, qui*
adorant Bestiam & Imaginem ejus: He adds, *Cum ergo hæc*
tormenta, hæc supplicia in die judicii Dominus commine-
tur iis qui Diabolo obtemperant, & Idolis sacrificant; quo
modo se putat, &c. Epist. p. 162. Ed. Fell.

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" that *Gog and Magog*, (the Enemies of God's
 " People perhaps at the Battle of *Harmaged-*
 " *don* *,) shall be *tormented there*." But of this
 in its proper Place. See N° XCVIII.

N° XCVI.

Apoc. xix. 3. *And her Smoke rose up for ever
 and ever.* [Mr. Whiston: *Babylon's Smoke
 rose up εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, for Ages of
 Ages, p. 48.] The Smoke of a City cannot be
 supposed to rise up for *ever and ever*. But that
 is not the thing intended: The thing intended
 is, that God had now *judged the great Whore*,
 or the mystical *Babylon*, and destroy'd her so
 totally and finally that she should never be
 restored: Her Destruction should be, not mere-
 ly for Ages of Ages, but *for ever and ever*.
 The Phrase, *Her Smoke rose up*, &c. is a strong
 propheticall Manner of representing an *everlast-*
ing Destruction of the City or Kingdom it is
 applied to. There is no reason therefore to li-
 mit the Words as Mr. *W.* has done.

N° XCVII.

Verf. 20. *These both, (viz. the Beast and the
 false Prophet,) were cast alive into a Lake of
 Fire burning with Brimstone.* See N° XXVII,
 and that which here follows.

N° XCVIII.

Ch. xx. 10. *And the Devil that deceived them,
 (viz. Gog and Magog,) was cast into the Lake*
 of

* See Dr. Burnet de futura Judæorum Restaurat. p.
 380, 381.

of Future Punishment. 145

of Fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophet are, and shall be tormented Day and Night, for ever and ever.

"THESE two additional Texts," Mr. W. says, "are evidently of the same sort with the foregoing, and so stand in need of little additional Observation." (P. 50.) If he means by the same sort, that they relate to the same Subject with the foregoing; (viz. N^o XCV, XCVI.) then, as he allows these to relate to the Punishment of the Wicked in *Gebenna*, he must consequently allow the foregoing to do so too. And how then can he say, as he does in this same Page, *That excepting this single Place, the Duration of the Punishment of the Wicked, is never properly said to be for more than τὴν αἰῶνα, or an Age, a single Age, in all the Books of the Old and New Testament?* And if these additional Texts do not relate to the same Subject with the foregoing, they may possibly stand in need of some additional Observation. But he wants to be rid of them: They lie heavy upon his *Hypothesis*, and like a Mill-stone about its Neck, will sink it. But let us attend to the additional Observation he is pleased to make:—"Only," continues he, "since the Place of *Gebenna* or *Hell* itself is said to be prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Matt. xxv. 41. And the same Devil is here said to be cast into this Lake of Fire, this makes it not a little probable" (I wonder what would make it certain?) "that, whatever Preludes to this dreadful

L

" Punish-

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“ Punishment there may be upon this Earth,
 “ at the coming on of this Fire and Brimstone,
 “ at the great Day ; yet will the upshot of all
 “ be no other than *the Fire of Gehenna* or *Hell*,
 “ *for Ages of Ages* afterward.” But he has for-
 got to produce the Passages in St. *John’s Re-*
velation, where αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων signifies
 only *Ages of Ages*, or any thing less than *for*
ever and ever. That Phrase is used fourteen
 times in the *Apocalypse* ; and never, as far as
 appears, in any other sense than *that* of Eter-
 nity. In far the greatest Number of the Passages
 it evidently must have that meaning ; and there-
 fore in the other two or three places under De-
 bate, unless the Subject plainly requires *another*
 sense, to give it a different meaning, is to destroy
 the Use of Language, and render the meaning of
 Words perfectly arbitrary. And that the Sub-
 ject does not require a *different Sense* of the
 Words in the controverted Texts, will appear, I
 trust, in the Course of these Papers. If Hell-
 torments *cannot, absolutely cannot*, in the nature
 of things, be eternal, why then indeed *this*
Phrase, in *these Places*, must denote only a tem-
 porary Duration ; but if this cannot be proved,
 if the contrary can, I would ask what reason any
 Man has to limit the Sense of the Words in these
 few Passages, contrary to their Import in all the
 rest ? Let us not make a *Nose of Wax* of the
 Scripture ; let its uniform Language have some
 determinate Sense. Mr. *W.* goes on ; “ It de-
 “ serves our Remark, that it is not directly said
 “ here, that the *Beast and the false Prophet*, but
 “ only

"only the Devil, with Gog and Magog, shall be
 "so long tormented there." Now, not to take
 notice of the Reading of this Text in some *Ver-*
sions, which is quite inconsistent with this Re-
 mark; I would only ask why *βασανισθήσονται*
 (being in the plural,) should not include the
Beast and the false Prophet, as well as the De-
 vil, and those he had *deceived*? And as to the
 Reason of the thing, why should the *Beast and*
the false Prophet come off better than Gog and
 Magog? The Text says they were *deceived*; and
 therefore Mr. *W.* might, if he had been so dis-
 posed, have applied his Apology to them, which
 he makes for other wicked Men, p. 19. *They*
fell into their Sins by the secret Snares of the
Devil, and other violent Temptations: So that if
 this be any Excuse, I don't see why Gog and Ma-
 gog should not have the Benefit of it. But they
 are, he says, a "People utterly unknown to us,
 "and not perhaps to be heard of till after the
 "*Millennium* is over:" And again, p. 104.
 "an unknown wicked People after the Mil-
 "*lennium* is over." * Now what a beggarly
 Refuge

* The Gentlemen, who with Mr. *W.* place this Battle
 of Gog and Magog after the *Millennium*, are reduced to
 great Difficulties to account for the *Origin* of this *wicked*
People, and to tell us from whence they come. If they
 be any Race of Mortals that inhabit the *present Earth*,
 the Question is, How they happen'd to survive the Con-
 flagration? Dr. Burnet therefore, very Philosopher-like,
 generates them anew *from the Slime of the Ground, and the*
Heat of the Sun: (*Theory B. iv. Ch. 10.*) But this is too
 gross to pass. Others suppose that the *Gentiles* to whom
 the Gospel was not preach'd before, shall be raised from
 the Dead during the *Millennium*; and the Gospel being
 then

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Refuge is this? What is it to the purpose, whether these People are known, or *unknown*, whether they live before the *Millennium*, or *after* it? Still they are God's Creatures; and will have as fair and impartial a Trial at the last great Day, as we ourselves shall have. And therefore if they may finally miscarry, and be *tormented for ever and ever*; —the Consequence is easy: *Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.* As to what Mr. *W.* asserts, *that excepting this single Place*, the Duration of future Punishment is never said to be for more than *a single Age*, (p. 50, and 104;) some notice has been taken of it already; compare N° XCV. It has not, he supposes, *been observed by any Commentator* before him; and will not, I believe, in haste by any Commentator after him.

N° XCIX.

Verf. 14, 15. *And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire: This is the second Death.*

then communicated to them by some Preachers sent out of the *New Jerusalem*, they who reject it, will at last compose this wicked Army of *Gog and Magog*. It is not pretended that the Scripture gives any countenance to this Conjecture. On the contrary, some Reasons are offer'd for the Silence of Scripture on this head. But the misfortune is, the Scripture is not so silent in the Case, as is supposed; but has rather determin'd on the other side. St. *Paul* plainly teaches, *Rom. Ch. ii.* that as the Gentiles had a Law, tho' not a written one, so they shall be judged by that Law at the great Day. And when St. *John* has told us that the *Martyrs* and *Saints* shall live in the *Millennium*, and *reign with Christ a thousand Years*, *Apoc. xx. 4.* he adds expressly in the next Verse, that *the rest of the Dead lived not again until the thousand Years were finished.*

See the *Preface* to Mr. *Johnson's* Select Discourses Doctrinal and Practical. Printed 1740.

Death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire. Ch. xxi. 8. But the Fearful and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone: which is the second Death.

I HAVE already in several places obviated what Mr. *W.* suggests under these Texts, p. 51, 52. about *Death*, the *second Death*, and the like. "The State of the worst sort of Sinners, he says, that are incorrigible, is never once styled *Life* at all." And it would be strange if it should; since *Life* in the Gospel-Dialect denotes that happy Immortality which is the Reward of the Righteous. In opposition to this ζωὴ αἰώνιος, *everlasting Life*, and σωτηρία αἰώνιος, *eternal Salvation*, the final State of the wicked that are incorrigible, is styled *Death*. And what sort of *Death* that is, the very *Opposition* shews. See N^o LXXII. Besides, the other Descriptions of it in the New Testament, explain the true Notion of it: such as πῦρ αἰώνιον, κόλασις αἰώνιος, κρίσις αἰώνιος, κέσμα αἰώνιον, ἐκδίκησις, τιμωρία: which certainly point out a State, not of Insensibility, but of Sensation and Punishment. As to our *Saviour's Words* referr'd to by Mr. *W.* see N^o X. Tho' he refers to them here as declaring for *the utter Dissolution or Destruction both of Body and Soul*, yet he owns there that they say no such thing; but

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leave room for hope that the Soul may remain capable of a second Resurrection, after the second Death is over. Thus he talks backwards and forwards, without any consistent Principles; sometimes in the *Hypothesis* of a Restoration, and sometimes in that of *Annihilation*; inferring which of them he pleases from the same Texts, just as it serves his turn; tho' 'tis certain they are utterly contradictory, and as Scripture cannot teach, so no Man can consistently argue for both. His Quotation from *Hermas* has been consider'd before, N^o XCIII. I have also shew'd, N^o LXIX, what is meant by the second Death, and by Death and Hades being cast into the Lake of Fire. "One cannot conceive any more, * says Dr. Wall, by Death and Hades cast into the Lake, than that there shall be no more Death or Hades; but all Heaven or Hell." And Lord King † having quoted St. John's Words, thus explains them; "That is, Death or the Grave surrendred her imprison'd Bodies, and Hell her detained Souls, after which their Empire and Power over the Children of Men was destroyed and annihilated." There will then be no more Death, that last Enemy will be destroyed, and swallowed up in Victory; 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54. And Hades, his Companion and Attendant, Apoc. vi. 8. † must follow with him. In consequence of this, the

* On the New Test. p. 413.

† Critical Hist. of the Creed, p. 227.

‡ Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδὲ ἵππος χλωρὸς, καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ ὁ Θάνατος· καὶ ὁ ᾗδης ἀκολουθεῖ μετ' αὐτοῦ.

the *second Death* with regard to wicked Men, cannot be any future Dissolution of Body and Soul; but a State of Punishment; having *their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone: This is the second Death.* In this Sense, *he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second Death: Apoc. ii. 11.* Nor would the Wicked be hurt by it, but greatly relieved, if it only meant Annihilation. "The Victory over temporal Death shall be in some measure (as has been already observed) universal; for all shall rise again from the Dead, and all both just and unjust shall be clothed with immortal and incorruptible Bodies, which shall never be dissolved any more. But tho' there shall be no more Dissolution of the Body, nor Separation of the Soul, yet is there a greater Destruction, into which they who believe not God, and obey not his Gospel, shall at last fall; and that is, the second Death; Rev. xxi. 8. The Fearful, the Unbelieving, the Abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Liars, shall have their part in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death." Dr. Clarke's Sermon, How Christ has given us the Victory over Death: Vol. V. p. 234.

Nº C.

Verf. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie: But*

they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. See N^o LXI, LXIV, LXVI.

N^o CI.

Ch. xxii. 11, 12. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: And he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: And he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly; and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work shall be.* See Dr. Clarke's two excellent Sermons on these Words, Vol. IX. p. 179. *God will reward all Men according to their Deserts.* Page 180, he says, "An Argument still more pressing than either of the former, (*viz.* Christ's declaring that he will reward every Man according to his Works, and his warning them of the Suddenness of his coming to distribute those Rewards; an Argument more pressing than either of these,) is this very Declaration, this additional Threatning, that even before his coming, if they continue obstinate, he will forsake and leave them to the Effects of their own Wickedness; *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still.*" P. 181;—"Denouncing to the obstinately wicked and impenitent, that if they will not be brought to a timely Repentance, by those Motives of Religion he has thought fit to afford them, he will give them up to themselves to eat the Fruit of their own Ways, and to be filled with their own Devices. *He that is unjust,*" &c. P. 182. "If therefore Men

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"Men *will* be wicked, after all reasonable means have been made use of for their Conviction ; nothing is more fit, nothing more becoming the supreme Governour of all things, than to give them over to continue in their Wickedness: Nor can any Punishment be more proper and equitable, if Men *will* be *unjust* in defiance of all the Arguments of the Gospel, in contempt of all the Mercies and all the Judgments of God ; than to let them *be unjust still*." P. 185. "*Wicked Men* ought earnestly to be warned, that, if they repent not very speedily, the time will soon come when it shall be too late for them to have any Alteration made in their State: *He that is unjust,*" &c. In the second Sermon, p. 211 ; he says,—" Besides the Shortness of the Time itself, (*viz.* to the End of the World ;) it is really to us much shorter, in that to *every particular Person*, the *World* comes to an end at the Conclusion of his *own* Life ; and to *him*, that moment which consigns him to Judgment, by requiring his Soul of him, and putting an end to all further Space of Probation ; is in all respects the very same thing, as if the Day of his Death were itself the great and final Day of Judgment."

—" That which will determine every Man's eternal Portion, is of necessity and inevitably very near ;—for this Cause our Saviour represents his coming as being very near : *Behold, I come quickly,*" &c. P. 223 ; " All the Mercies and all the Judgments of God, all the

" Promises

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“ Promises and all the Threatnings in Scripture;
 “ in a word, the whole Design of the Gospel;
 “ is to call Sinners to Repentance. If they will
 “ not be drawn by these Cords of a Man, by
 “ these Motives suited to the Nature of rational
 “ Creatures; God is not obliged to compel them
 “ by Force, and to use Methods inconsistent
 “ with his Government of the moral World.”
 In the next Page,—“ If we will not be made
 “ happy, unless God work a Miracle to alter
 “ our Wills; if we will not become righteous,
 “ unless he change our Nature, and compel us
 “ contrary to the Order and Method of his
 “ Creation, and of his Government of reasonable
 “ Creatures; both Reason and Scripture assure
 “ us, that he may very justly suffer us to go on
 “ to be wicked and miserable.” Once more,
 p. 228;—“ Of all obstinately wicked and incor-
 “ rigible Persons, (it is said) in the Words of the
 “ Text, at the End of the whole Scripture; that
 “ if they will not be moved to repent, by the
 “ things contain’d in that Book, by all the Ar-
 “ guments and Motives of the Gospel; then be
 “ *that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and be*
 “ *that is filthy, let him be filthy still.*”

I HAVE quoted so much from Dr. *Clarke* *,
 not only because it explains St. *John*’s Words,
 but

* I may add also Archbishop *Tilloison*. “ This Life
 “ is the Time of our Preparation for our future State.
 “ Our Souls will continue for ever what we make them
 “ in this World. Such a Temper and Disposition of
 “ Mind as a Man carries with him out of this Life, he
 “ shall

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but also because it lays the Foundation of the Doctrine I contend for. Here is no express Declaration indeed, either in the Text or Comment, of the *Duration* of future Punishments; but here is an express Declaration that God will reward every Man according as his Work shall be; and that Men may become so obstinately and incorrigibly wicked, that it will be in vain to use any means to recover them; and that therefore no more means will be used. It is possible in the Nature of Things that such Creatures may be *annihilated*, because there is a Power in being able to effect this. But to argue from mere Power, in this case, (and indeed in most cases,) is unphilosophical and absurd. We must attend to the Nature and Reasons of Things, and the Declarations of God's Will; and there is no ground from these to expect Annihilation, but much to the contrary.

N° CII.

Verf. 15. *For without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.* See N° C. and the other Texts there referred to. Such as these are excluded out of the *Holy City*, have no *Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God*, but are cast out
into

"shall retain in the next. 'Tis true indeed, Heaven perfects those holy and virtuous Dispositions which are begun here; but the other World alters no Man as to his main State, *he that is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is unrighteous will be unrighteous still.*" Sermon on Phil. iii. 20.

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into outer Darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, in the everlaſting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels; and the Smoke of their Torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever.

Nº CIII.

Verſ. 18, 19. For I teſtify unto every Man that beareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any Man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book: And if any Man ſhall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God ſhall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book.

ONE of the firſt Texts we quoted above is *John the Baptiſt's* Teſtimony of our Saviour, *Matt. iii. 12. Whoſe Fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his Floor, and gather his Wheat into the Garner: But will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable Fire.* This Text contains, ſays *Dr. Clarke*, “ a diſtinct Declaration, that the great Deſign of God, as in
“ every Diſpenſation of Religion in general, ſo
“ in the Goſpel more particularly, is to ſeparate
“ the Evil from the Good by proper Trials:
“ And that this Deſign will be effectually accompliſh'd by *Chriſt*; in the preſent Life
“ partly, and to certain Degrees; in the future
“ Life

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"Life *perfectly, totally, and finally.*" With this Declaration of the *Baptist's*, almost in the Beginning of the New Testament, agree our Lord's own Words here, at the End of it. We see in this last Chapter of the *Revelation*, the *complete* Establishment of the Kingdom and City of God ; when the *Wicked* shall be *separated* from among the *Just*, totally and for ever. And this evidently appears from all the Texts produced in these *two Chapters*, to be the uniform Doctrine of the New Testament, from one end of it to the other.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

In which the Doctrine collected from the Texts above cited, is farther asserted, and reconciled with the moral Perfections of God.

IT is abundantly clear from the two preceding Chapters, that at the Day of Judgment a *Separation* will be made between the righteous and the wicked. This indeed, excepting the Circumstance of the Time, is not so properly a Point of Revelation, as the fundamental Principle of all Religion, as well Natural as Revealed: *For he that cometh to God, in any Act of Religion, or religious Worship, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him; Heb. xi. 6.* Without this Retribution, which implies Punishment as well as Reward, (tho' it was to the Apostle's purpose here to mention only the latter,) Religion signifies nothing; the same End, and the same Event would come alike to all Men; and as no Distinction would be made either here or hereafter, between the good and the bad, God Almighty could not be said to be the moral Governour and Judge of the World. It is therefore a certain, clear, and fundamental Principle of all Religion, that there will be a Retribution both to good and bad. The Scriptures,
especially

especially of the New Testament, teach us, that this Retribution will be made at the Day of Judgment; then shall the righteous and the wicked be separated from one another, *and these shall go away into everlasting Punishment; but the righteous into Life eternal.* See N^o XXII.

THE Question we are immediately concern'd in is, Whether this Punishment of the wicked, subsequent to the Day of Judgment, will be strictly everlasting, or eternal? It will appear plainly to any one who reads the Testimonies produced above, which way the Language of the New Testament leans in this point. This certainly leads us to the affirmative Side of the Question. Archbishop Tillotson, in his famous Sermon on the Subject, makes it one Head of his Discourse to shew, *That the eternal Punishment of wicked Men in another World is plainly threatned in Scripture.* This is plain, if Words can threaten any thing plainly; or if it be plainly promised that the Life of the Righteous in another World will be eternal. And this, I suspect, is the real Reason at bottom, tho' some other Pretences are suggested, (of which more in its proper place,) why Mr. Whiston denies both. This Gentleman takes the liberty to assert, that eternal Punishments are intirely unjust in their own nature; extremely cruel and barbarous, both in the Threatening, and in the Execution*. Here, we see, lies the Root of the Matter. Texts and Testimonies of Scripture, and Fathers,

* P. 136.

Fathers, may be quoted, in a manner, such a manner as it is; but what is all this to the purpose? The Case is prejudged, and in effect determined before-hand. And what Sentence can one expect from a Judge, who at the same time that he calls in Witnesses, and pretends to examine them, makes a Declaration that, however, let them say what they will, the Cause is so absurd, or so unjust in its own nature, that no Evidence will be sufficient to prove it? Dr. *Burnet*, tho' a great Opposer of the Eternity of future Punishment, yet is forced to own that the Scripture seems to be on the other side. *Natura humana abhorret ab ipso nomine poenarum æternarum, &c. At Scriptura sacra à partibus contrariis stare videtur* *. But then Reason,

* *De Statu Mort. et Resurg.* p. 288. Edit. 2da. After the Words above quoted, he goes on thus: — *Humani Generis amantissimus Jesus Christus, aperte et explicitè has poenas Dæmonum et Damnatorum æternas appellat: cum Bonorum et Malorum explicans fata, Sententiam in improbos hac formula pronunciat; Execrati abite à me in Ignem æternum, qui paratus est Diabolo et Angelis ejus, Matt. xxv. 41. Eodem sensu, Tritico in Horreum collecto, Paleam exurendam dicit Igne inextincto, Matt. iii. 12. Et in Gehenna non mori Vermem nec extinguere Ignem, Mar. ix. 44. Hæc testari videntur, idque ex ore Christi, Improborum poenas fore æternas et interminatas. Neque aliter loquuntur Prophetæ et Apostoli, Dan. xii. 2. 2 Thes. i. 9. — What can give a Man, who owns all this, the Hardiness to contradict it? And who admits too at the same time that Rule of Interpretation, à *Litera non recedendum esse sine necessitate*. Why truly, there are Reasons, manifest Reasons and invincible Arguments, against this Doctrine: that is, against the plain and explicit Declarations of Jesus Christ himself, the Prophets and Apostles. On the contrary, I am satisfied, first, that there are no*

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Reason, he says, the Nature of God, and the Nature of Things, reclaim loudly. We see where the thing rests. It would readily be acknowledged that the Scripture teaches eternal Punishments, if the Doctrine could be reconcil'd with Reason, and our natural Notions of God's Perfections. This therefore is what I am now to attempt: And in order to it, I observe,

FIRST, *That the Doctrine of eternal Punishments all along proceeds upon the Supposition, that the Persons condemned to them, are incurably wicked, and fix'd in a State and Temper of Mind everlastingly and unalterably evil.* This, I conceive, if He will be consistent with himself, Mr. Whiston cannot well deny; since he declares it is perfectly agreeable to the Testimonies sacred and primitive, and what they all agree in, that what Repentance or Pardon soever there may be in Hades, the State of Preparation, there is no hopes of either in Gehenna, or Hell itself, P. 73. See N^o XV. above. In other places, He speaks of such as are incorrigibly wicked;— of abandoned Wretches, whom no Methods of Mercy, or Correction, or Preaching of Christ, or his Apostles, either on Earth, or in Hades, could bring

such Reasons: and, 2^{dly}, that if there were, it is not likely that Men should be able to discover them. It cannot be consistent with the Wisdom of God to threaten, what is inconsistent with any known Perfection of his Nature to execute. Such Conduct is below the Wisdom of an earthly Lawgiver; and such empty Threats, as soon as they were discover'd to be so, would only expose Him, and his Laws, to Contempt.

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bring to Repentance and Salvation, p. 117. Now, supposing such Beings as these, Men or Devils, what can even Goodness itself do with them? It is not possible in the Nature of Things, that such Creatures should be made happy; it is no way desirable, Mr. *W.* allows, *that they should ever be made happy, either in this, or another World*, p. 131. There is no Expedient then to relieve them, but Annihilation; a Point which I must discuss by itself, and which therefore I take the liberty at present to suppose out of the question. This therefore being set aside for the present; I ask again, what the great Governour and Judge of the World *can* do with such Creatures *? It is inconsistent

* Mr. *Swinden* in his Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell, p. 284. had asserted, “that the *Mercy of God*, tho’ infinite as himself, is yet not capable of being extended to those obstinate and wilful Offenders, (viz. *the Devil and his Angels*, whom he had just mentioned,) to them that despise, revile, and trample it under foot, to them that contemn, and undermine, and oppose the gracious Designs of it.” Somebody who writ a *Supplement*, as he calls it, (tho’ he did not so much as know what the word *Supplement* means,) takes Mr. *Swinden* to task for this Assertion, p. 364. “It must appear, he says, *greatly surprizing*, that after Mr. *Swinden* has declared his *Approbation* of the *Freedom of Thought*, which ought to be allowed to every *Writer*, that he should pronounce such an *ipse dixit*, as to assert—that, “the *Mercy of God*, which, though infinite as *Himself*, is yet not capable of being extended to *Sinners*.” The Grammar and Sense of this Period are of a piece. The *Devil and his Angels*, and such obstinate and incorrigible Offenders, are turn’d into *Sinners* in general, penitent or impenitent; and Mr. *Swinden* is made to say, that the infinite Mercy of God cannot be extended

consistent with every moral Perfection of his Nature to *reward* them; it is inconsistent with Justice, and Reason, and Truth; it is inconsistent with Goodness itself, if Goodness be consistent with Rectitude, with doing always what is right and best. It is inconsistent with their Depravity, and their utter moral Incapacity of becoming better, wilfully and obstinately contracted by themselves, ever to be made happy. There will be no Amendment in their Temper, no Change, or Reformation of their evil Habits; that is, no Alteration, for the better, in their *moral* State: And why then should there, or how indeed can there, be any in their *natural*? If it was right and reasonable, and consistent with the moral Attributes of God, to punish them for a Year, or a Day; it will be so still, to punish them for ever, if they themselves, and all the Reasons of their Punishment, remain the same for ever: Which is according to the Supposition.

THERE are but two things, as far as I can discern, that can be objected to this Account. One is, that the Supposition itself of their incorrigible Wickedness, or incurably wicked Temper, is unreasonable; since all intelligent

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Beings,

extended to *Sinners*. When a Man thus misrepresents his Adversary's Argument, take it for a Confession that he cannot answer it. What Mr. *Swinden* says, wants no Proof, and is capable of no Confutation. It is evident from the clearest Ideas in the human Mind, that the only possible Object of *Mercy* is *Penitence*; unless you mean by *Mercy* an Imperfection, an irrational Weakness, by no means compatible to the great God, the supreme Governour and Judge of the World.

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Beings, sooner or later, will probably return to Order. The other is, that allowing the Supposition, that free Beings can thus fix themselves in a State of incurable and endless Wickedness and Misery, it is not consistent with the Perfections of God, who must know and foresee this, to create them. I must speak more particularly to the first Point, when I come to examine what they call the System of the Restoration, or Re-establishment. I only say now in general, that the Case supposed, may possibly be a real one. We cannot from any clear Ideas prove, that such final incurable Perverseness and Depravity is impossible, in the nature of things. And we know an instance, in fact, of Beings, who have continued in such a State of moral Disorder, for upwards, it may be, of six thousand Years. They may continue the same for six Millions more, and so on for ever. For length of time signifies nothing towards producing a real Reformation, which is not an Event that comes to pass of course; but serves only to confirm their evil Temper and Habits, and ingraft them more deeply in their very Frame and Constitution. However, as I said before, this is the Supposition, on which the Doctrine of eternal Punishment proceeds. It is in vain therefore to say, how they would be dealt with in case they repented, and became really virtuous; for there is no such Case supposed. They have render'd themselves incapable of it, by their own free and deliberate Choice; and the Means and Opportunities of it are no longer afforded them.

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part N^o XII, XIII, XVI, XIX, XX, XXI, XXV,
CI. And what is advanced under each.

BUT it is said, that this Supposition is inconsistent with the Divine Perfections;—it is inconsistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, so to form and constitute the Human or Rational Nature, that it should be possible for it to degenerate into incurable Depravity: or, if he would so frame it, it ought at least to have been with this Reserve, that when it once came to that Extremity, it should return to nothing. In short, no Creatures ought to be exposed to the terrible Risque of eternal Damnation: They would have reason to upbraid the Creator for giving them Existence *.

I AM satisfied, for my own part, that Men who talk thus, talk they know not what; and throw some words together, without any clear Ideas. *God must not form or constitute the human or rational Nature, so as it shall be capable of degenerating into a State of incurable Wickedness* †. But it should have been clearly proved,

* Burnet ubi sup. p. 291. and the Introduction to some Letters on this Subject, at the end of a Book entitled, *The World unmask'd; or the Philosopher the greatest Cheat*. Translated from the French, and printed 1736.

† “ Others there are, who have presumptuously taken upon them to argue, that, according to *their* Notions of the Divine Goodness, all Creatures should be made capable of Happiness only, and none of them liable to fall into Misery. But then it would follow, that God had no right to create any rational or free Agents at all. For where-ever
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proved, that such a Capacity as is here mention'd, is not implied in the very nature and notion of a free Creature ; such as human or rational Beings are. These must have a power of chusing evil ; that is, of making a wrong Choice. And, possibly, they may make it so obstinately, and so long, that at last they cannot, or will not, make any other. Must God then, to prevent this accidental Consequence, or Abuse, of Liberty, create no free Beings at all? That would be hard ; would rob him of his Glory, and Millions of Creatures, (who make a right use of their Liberty,) of their Happiness. Well, but if this be the Case, and *free Agents* must be created, who, as such, *may* wilfully render themselves incurably wicked ; it should be, however, with this Condition, *hac saltem lege & modo*, that when they once arrived at this pitch, *they should fall back again into nothing*. But what if this Project too, should be a Violation of the Nature of things? What if God created all human,

there is *Freedom*, (except only in *God himself*, who is by nature *essentially* and *immutably* good ; where-ever else, I say, there is *Freedom*,) in *whatever* proportion and degree it be, there *must* be accordingly a power of choosing *Evil* as well as *Good* ; and where there is no possibility of *Disobedience*, there can be properly no *Obedience* neither ; nor *any Virtue*, where there is no room for *Vice*. Sufficient it is, that God, the supreme Judge and Governour of all, will deal with every one *proportionally* according to their respective Circumstances ; and will finally *punish even incorrigible Wickedness itself*, not arbitrarily, but according to its just Deserts ; and in such manner as shall appear to become him, who is *all-wise* and *good* as well as *all-powerful*, to act in his Government of the Universe." Dr. Clarke, Sermon on *Matt.* xxv. 46. Vol. VII. p. 409.

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man, and all rational, Beings, *eadem lege & modo*; all equally incapable, the wicked as well as the virtuous, *of falling back into nothing*? Is there any thing unjust in this? Any thing, but what is highly congruous, uniform and proper? Must different Men, the good and the bad, have Souls of a different nature? The Souls of the good, under God, naturally immortal; while those of the incurably wicked, should have a natural Tendency to *slide back again into nothing*? This is absurd, contradictory, and impossible. The Souls of Men must be all of the same Nature and Order. And Dr. Burnet himself has excellently proved, in his *second Chapter*, that they are naturally immortal. This therefore is the Constitution which God has actually establish'd; and is therefore again, we may be sure, the best. Still, however, it is in the power of God to *annihilate* them; tho' they have no Tendency in their own nature *to fall back into nothing*. But is God Almighty obliged to do this? Yes, says Dr. Burnet, the Honour of Providence cannot be maintain'd without it. That is, the Honour of Providence cannot be maintain'd, unless by arbitrary Interpositions of mere Power, it acts contrary to the original Constitution, and Nature of things; unless it reverses its own Laws; and in favour of its greatest Enemies, reduces into nothing, Beings created naturally immortal, capable of eternal Happiness, and who once stood a fair and equal Chance for it, but voluntarily render'd themselves incurably

M 4 wicked,

wicked, and miserable. To say, * as is said, that these Beings can be *of no use*, is saying a great deal more than any Man knows. However, this is certain, they can be of little use after they are annihilated; and the Example perhaps, if known, might be of ill Consequence to other Creatures, (if any such there should be,) in some future States of Probation; besides that it is contrary to the nature of things. I doubt not but we should find, if we could comprehend the whole Scheme and Conduct of Providence, that it always acts uniformly, agreeably to the Nature of things, and its own original Constitution, and Appointment, in the Creation. Beings created naturally immortal, that is, to exist for ever, with the ordinary Influence and Concurrence of God, will never be destroy'd preternaturally by the Power of God. They must abide by the Consequences of the Nature which God at first implanted in them. But being thus *exposed to the terrible Risque of eternal Damnation, they will have reason, it seems, to upbraid their Creator for giving them Existence.* Why so? He not only gave them Existence, but all the necessary Means of rendering that Existence

* Both by Dr. Burnet, p. 290, and Mr. Whiston, p. 19. Tho' this last Gentleman once talk'd as if they would be *a most useful Spectacle*, (their place of Torment being the Atmosphere of a Comet, revolving in the sight of all the Inhabitants of our Air, and of the rest of the System,) to the rest of God's rational Creatures; and would admonish them above all things to preserve their Innocence and Obedience; and to *fear him who is thus able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.* Astronomical Principles of Religion, p. 156.

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stence happy, thro' the whole Extent of its endless Duration. Was this an ill Gift? It proved so, you'll say, in the Event: But was *that* the Creator's fault? Must he create them necessarily happy, without Liberty, or Virtue; without any Probation? We see he has not done this; the Constitution which he has establish'd in fact, is of a contrary kind; and there is no arguing against it, but upon the Principles of Atheism. We are all of us yet in this probationary State; and consequently *exposed to the terrible risque of eternal Damnation*; that is, we may incur this Doom, if we will. But is there any room for Complaint upon this Head? Any reason to upbraid the Creator? Can we, consistently with any Principles of Religion, upbraid him for giving us Existence, upon these Terms? Suppose now this State of Probation over. We are disposed of in another, of exact distributive Justice; where our natural Condition will be as good, as our moral Temper and Habits deserve; or, all things consider'd, perhaps, will admit of: that is, they will be exactly adapted, and suited to each other. Where then will be the Reason to *upbraid the Creator*? If we are miserable, still All is right. And there will be no more *reason to upbraid God* in that State of Retribution, than there was before, in the State of Probation. It would be a miserable Universe, if this righteous Disposition of things did not finally prevail. I will close this Article in the words of a fine Reasoner, which will have more weight than any of my own.

“ To

“ To produce a Being into a State of *clear*
 “ *Happiness*, in any degree, can be no injury to
 “ it; or into a State of *mixt Happiness*, pro-
 “ vided the Happiness certainly *over-balances*
 “ the contrary, and the unhappy or suffering
 “ Part be not greater than what that Being would
 “ *choose* in order to obtain the Happiness, or ra-
 “ ther than lose it. Nor, again, can any wrong
 “ be done by producing a Being *subject* to more
 “ Misery than Happiness, if that Being hath it
 “ in *his own power* to avoid the Misery, or so
 “ much of it, as may leave the Remainder of
 “ Misery not greater, than what he would ra-
 “ ther sustain than miss the Proportion of Hap-
 “ piness. * The only Case then, by which
 “ wrong can be done in the Production of any
 “ Being, is, when it is *necessarily* and *irreme-*
 “ *diably* to be *miserable*, without any, Recom-
 “ pense, or Balance of that Misery: And this
 “ indeed is a Case so grievous, so utterly irrecon-
 “ cilable to all *Reason*, that the Heart of a rea-
 “ soning and considering Man can scarce bear
 “ the Thought of it. So much every one
 “ must understand of the nature of Reason and
 “ Justice, as to allow these things for Truths in-
 “ contestable.” *Religion of Nature delineated*,
 p. 200. 5th Edit.

I

* Hence may appear the Difference between the Doc-
 trine of the Eternity of future Punishments, and the Doc-
 trine of absolute Reprobation: Two very different things,
 tho' Mr. *W.* p. 2. and Dr. *Burnet*, p. 308. are pleased to
 rank them together.

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I PASS on to a second Observation, intimated more than once already, viz. *That the Degrees of this future Punishment will be infinitely various, and exactly in proportion to the Guilt and Demerit of those who suffer them* *. It is plainly declar'd in Scripture, that it will be more tolerable for some than for others, in the Day of Judgment; and that some will receive a greater Damnation. And indeed this Doctrine of the Degrees, and different Measures, of Punishment, is implied in the very Notion of a just and righteous Judgment. I need not therefore undertake formally to prove this Point. "It is certain," says Mr. *Whiston*, and agreed to by all, that "some Sinners deserve much greater Punishment than others; and that God will render
" to

* "There is such a Difference acknowledged in the
" State of the Blessed, where all are happy according to
" their several Capacities, and so it is in Hell, where all are
" miserable if compared with the Condition of the Blessed, but in different Degrees; and as in this Life some
" are so unfortunate that it were better for them not to
" be at all, than to continue always in the State in which
" they are; so in Hell there may be some whose Condition is preferable to not being; tho' for *Judas* and such
" Sinners it had been better they had never been."

Archbishop King, Sermon on the *Fall of Man*, at the End of the 2d Vol. of *The Origin of Evil*.

It is better, perhaps, not to determine any thing about the Point here mention'd by the Archbishop. All that are condemn'd to Hell, suffer, of course, the Loss of Heaven, and all that is included in the *Pœna Damni*. If they *deserve* to suffer no more, they *will* suffer no more. And every Degree of positive Punishment superadded, will be no more than what is just and necessary. So that no one's Existence will be worse than Non-existence, wrongfully, or without Reason.

“ to every one according to his Works: That
 “ some will be beaten with *many*, and others
 “ with *few Stripes*, in the future World.”
 (P. 108.) This Principle, thus agreed to by all,
 our Adversaries endeavour to make their advantage of: (tho’ they seem to forget it, upon some other occasions; when, in their rhetorical Declarations upon this Subject, they seem to represent all the Sufferers alike, in the same exquisite, and extreme Degree of Torment.) It most naturally implies, Mr. W. tells us, that the Punishment of some of the wicked shall be much longer than of others *. But why longer? Cannot some be beaten with more Stripes than others,

* To what Mr. W. alledges out of *Justin Martyr*, I answer, that it is evident from his own Testimonies out of that Father, p. 76, 77. that he asserted the Eternity of future Punishment; which Testimonies however, he has castrated by his arbitrary Interpretation. As to what *Justin* says in the Place here referred to, it must be observ’d, that he is arguing against that independent Immortality of the Soul, asserted by the *Platonists*, which implies a *beginningless*, as well as *endless* Duration; in which sense, God only hath Immortality. In this sense, he will not allow the Souls of Men to be immortal; not that they will ever *perish*, for those of the good, he expressly says, shall *die no more*; and those of the wicked shall be punish’d as long as God wills to *continue them in Being*, and to *punish them*. The Meaning of which is, agreeably to the Point he is upon, that their Existence is dependent upon God; who as he at first gave, has it always in his power to take it away. But that he ever will do so, is not said; nor consistent with what *Justin* teaches, concerning their *endless* Punishment, elsewhere: See the Pages above referred to, in Mr. W’s Book. See also the Notes in *Jebb’s* Edition of the *Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 19, 21. And for a full Vindication of *Justin Martyr*, see Mr. *Chishull’s* Charge of Heresy, chap. iii.

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others, tho' their Existence in that Place of Torment be of equal Duration? May not some *Prisoners* deserve, and meet with, better Treatment than others, tho' the Time of their Confinement in *Prison* be the same? Tho' the Scriptures tell us that God will *render to every Man according to his Works*, and make mention of the *many*, and of the *few* Stripes; yet they never say, that some shall be punish'd for a long time, (εἰς χρόνον πολὺν;) and others for a short time, (εἰς χρόνον μικρὸν, or εἰς ὀλίγον καιρὸν.) But the Difference always turns upon the Variety of Degrees, and not at all upon the Inequality of the Duration; the Punishment of all being represented as αἰώνιος, or εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, equally; never once, as περὶ χρόνον temporal, or for a Season. This Difference of Degrees, therefore, is the thing *most naturally implied*, according to the whole Tenour of Scripture, when any Difference is spoken of*. But this *equal Duration*, Mr. W. says, p. 108. is *contrary to the most obvious Rules of Right and Justice in the World*. I, on the other hand, assert, that since there will be so great a Difference in the Degrees of Punishment, each Man's being exactly suited to the Demerit of his Sin, and the Malignity of his Temper, there will be no Injustice in the *equal Duration* of it: And that *the Judge of all the Earth* will still *do right*, tho' he does not preternaturally annihilate those Creatures, whom he originally created naturally immortal. "For why, I beseech you," says Dr. Clarke, "must it

* Compare what is said N^o XXXV.

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“ it needs be supposed, that God cannot dis-
 “ pose of all his rational Creatures into States
 “ suitable to their several Natures, and propor-
 “ tionable to their several Capacities and Deserts,
 “ without destroying and taking away their
 “ Being?” *Letter to Mr. Dodwell*, p. 62. And
 again, p. 67. “ But certainly it is a very weak
 “ and poor Argument, to conclude that num-
 “ berless Souls must therefore necessarily be an-
 “ nihilated, merely because we do not know in
 “ particular, what State and Condition it will
 “ please God to assign them.” There can be
 no doubt, but that God can thus dispose of all
 his Creatures, (incorrigibly wicked Christians,
 as well as Heathens, and Infants,) in such a man-
 ner as is right, and best upon the whole; and yet
 so, that none of them shall suffer more than the
 Reason of the thing demands, or their own Ini-
 quities deserve. And provided this be but done,
 there will be no reasonable Ground of Com-
 plaint, because he does not take away their Being.

A THIRD Observation to be made is, that
these Punishments are not merely arbitrary, or so
to be understood, as if God interposed every mo-
ment to inflict them, by Acts of mere Power and
Will; but they are the natural and necessary
Consequence and Result of things. There is a
 Man indeed who calls himself, or his Book, *the*
Moral Philosopher, (and *one* is as much so, as
 the *other*,) who denies all this; and tells us that
 “ these Rewards and Punishments must be such
 “ as are *not* the natural, necessary Consequences
 “ of

“ of the Actions themselves, since every one
“ must see that this would be no Government
“ at all, and that the Case, in this respect, must
“ be the very same whether we suppose any
“ Rectoral Justice, or any Presence or Operation
“ of God in the World or not.” P. 189, 190.
1 Vol. It is my misfortune not to see this, or any
thing like it. On the contrary, I see plainly
that the Government of God at present, is, in
general, administer’d in a different way. And
yet this is very far from being the *very same*, as
to *suppose*, that there is no *Presence or Operation*
of God in the World. But I beg leave to il-
lustrate this Point in the words of a great and
excellent Writer, who has introduced the solid
manner of reasoning upon *moral* Subjects, so
highly and so justly approved in *natural*, build-
ing nothing upon Conjecture and *Hypothesis*, but
all upon Facts and Experience. It will be im-
mediately seen that I mean Bp. Butler, whose
Analogy of Religion natural and revealed, to
the Constitution and Course of Nature, is one of
the noblest Performances *our* Age has produced,
and would have been an Honour to *any*. —
“ From this general Observation, obvious to
“ every one, that God has given us to under-
“ stand, he has appointed Satisfaction and De-
“ light to be the Consequence of our acting in
“ one manner, and Pain and Uneasiness of our
“ acting in another, and of our not acting at
“ all; and that we find these Consequences,
“ which we were beforehand inform’d of, uni-
“ formly to follow; we may learn, that we are
“ at

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“ at present actually under his Government in
 “ the strictest and most proper sense ; in such
 “ a sense, as that he rewards and punishes us
 “ for our Actions. An Author of Nature be-
 “ ing supposed, it is not so much a Deduction
 “ of Reason, as a Matter of Experience, that
 “ we are thus under his Government: Under
 “ his Government, in the same sense, as we
 “ are under the Government of civil Magistrates.
 “ Because the annexing Pleasure to some Ac-
 “ tions, and Pain to others, in our power to do
 “ or forbear, and giving notice of this Appoint-
 “ ment beforehand to those whom it concerns ;
 “ is the proper formal Notion of Government.
 “ Whether the Pleasure or Pain which thus
 “ follows upon what we do, be owing, to the
 “ Author of Nature’s acting upon us every Mo-
 “ ment which we feel it ; or to his having at
 “ once contrived and executed his own Part in
 “ the Plan of the World ; makes no alteration
 “ as to the Matter before us. For if civil Ma-
 “ gistrates could make the Sanctions of their
 “ Laws take place, without interposing at all,
 “ after they had passed them ; without a Trial,
 “ and the Formalities of an Execution : If they
 “ were able to make their Laws execute them-
 “ selves, or every Offender to execute them
 “ upon himself ; we should be just in the same
 “ sense under their Government then, as we are
 “ now : But in a much higher Degree, and more
 “ perfect Manner.” (P. 35. 4to Edit.) *

* Compare Archbishop King’s Appendix to his Origin
of Evil, Sect. iii.

As this then is not only a *possible*, but a *real* Case, the *Case in Fact*, under the *present* Government of God ; it may be the same, even in a much higher degree, and more perfect manner, in the *future* State of Retribution. The natural Consequences of Things and Actions may then take their course, with less Disturbance and Interruption. Natural and moral Evil will be closely connected, and every Degree of the one be attended with an equal Degree of the other. It is a jest to say, that this is inconsistent with the Notion of governing Justice ; which is rather an illustrious Display of it. For what does that require more, than that wicked Agents should be punish'd, proportionably as their Iniquities deserve ? And whether this Punishment comes upon them, in the way of natural Consequence, or of positive Infliction, *pro Re nata*, makes no difference *as to them* ; for the Punishment is supposed to be equally *the same*. And as to the *Presence and Operation of God*, they are by no means excluded by this Supposition. The whole Scheme is originally his Contrivance and Constitution. He is present *every where*, and acts *always* ; but *uniformly*, agreeably to certain Laws founded in eternal Wisdom, Reason, and Truth ; or to those Ideas in the divine Mind, according to which all things were created. This is acting according to the Nature of Things, which surely is very different from *not acting* at all ; and seems to be more worthy of the Deity, than acting by occasional and arbitrary

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Interpositions

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Interpositions of Power; the way in which poor Mortals act, for want of Ability to contrive, execute, or even comprehend, a System of Government, so universal, so complex, and so perfect as the other.

IN short, there are two ways in which future Punishments may be supposed to be inflicted: They may either proceed arbitrarily from the Will of God, or necessarily from the Nature of Things. Which of these appears to be most worthy of God, and most analogous to the present Administration of Providence, I leave the World to judge. The arbitrary Scheme is perplex'd with many Difficulties *, of which the other stands clear. There *are* certain Consequences of Actions and Habits, which, of course, will take place. And if these will constitute a just and adequate Punishment, (and who can prove they will not?) what Reason is there to superadd any other kinds of Torment, *pro arbitrio*, which have no natural Connection with the Crimes to be punish'd? If it be ask'd, what all these natural Consequences are, which will constitute this Punishment, in the future World? I answer, that I am not able to tell distinctly; nor do I know who is. But we see that Vice has terrible Consequences, which naturally attend and follow it, in the present Scene of Things.

And

* See this prov'd in a Piece entitled, *The Doctrine of Hell-Torments distinctly and impartially discussed*. Printed for J. Noon, 1738. I don't undertake to answer for all the Author's Premises; but I agree with him in his Conclusion, that the Punishments are not arbitrary.

And there is no reason to think that it will be otherwise, when this Scene of things is over. It is easily conceivable, how inveterate and incurable Habits of it, may affect the Temper and Frame of the Soul. And tho' there may be more difficulty in this Point, with regard to the new-raised Body,* ; yet we know that the *Man* cannot be happy, while the *Mind* is miserable. Besides, the Nature of the State and Place to which they are condemned, must be taken into Consideration ; as also the *Company* they are confin'd to ; *that* of Beings like themselves, wholly alienated from the Nature and Life of God ; and such as have extinguished all the Sparks of virtuous and good Affection. In the natural Result, and necessary Consequences, of these things together, their Punishment will consist ; and nothing more terrible can be presented to a thoughtful and virtuous Mind.

SUPPOSING this to be the Case, the Threats of eternal Punishment must be considered, as so many *plain Declarations* of the *natural Consequences* of a wicked Life : And will not so properly be *executed*, by the particular Interposition

N 2

of

* Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus omnes *Corporeæ* excedunt pestes ; penitusque necesse est Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.

Habits contracted in the Body in this State of Probation, may adhere to it after the Resurrection ; just as they would have done, if the Sinner had lived all the intermediate Time, and no Interval had passed in the Grave. And how these may affect it, we cannot tell distinctly, unless we knew more particularly with what Bodies they shall be raised.

of any Being whatever, as come to pass of course, necessarily, and in the very nature of things. It is absurd therefore to say, that this Punishment is *extremely cruel and barbarous, both in the Threatening, and in the Execution* *. The Execution results from the Nature of things; from the necessary Connection between natural and moral Good and Evil; and the Threatening is a fair Warning, a gracious Admonition, or, as I said before, a *plain Declaration* of what will, and must, inevitably follow, if Men chuse, and finally persevere in their Choice of the latter. This is so far from being an Act of Cruelty, that it is an Instance of Goodness, design'd to prevent Men from incurring the Punishment denounced, by leading them to Repentance. And to complain of it, is a thousand times more absurd, than to complain of a Man who shews you a Precipice, only to hinder you from being dash'd to pieces. But, 4thly,

I MAKE it a distinct Observation, in order to vindicate the Ways of God to Man, with regard to this Subject, that *Men were apprized and forewarned of this Constitution, and of the Consequences of a wicked Life*. The Debate before us was, in the Beginning of it, confin'd to the Case of *Christians*. Not because others also shall not be brought into Judgment, and pu-

* *Indulgens est enim, (Deus,) etiam tunc cum minatur dum per hæc homines ad recta revocantur. Nam quibus ad honestam vitam deest Ratio, metus est necessarius; ut qui rationem reliquerunt, vel terrore moveantur. Novatian. de Trinitate, Cap. v.*

See Mr. Ray's *Three Physico-Theological Discourses*, Discourse the *Third*, Cap. *1st*.

nished as their Iniquities deserve; but because the Gospel, the Punishments denounced in which only we are now considering, concerns itself only with Christians. And these have no reason to complain that they are not previously inform'd of the Danger, and forewarn'd of the terrible Consequences, of their Disobedience. For as *Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Gospel**, so also in the same Gospel is revealed, in the plainest and most positive Terms, *the Wrath of God against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men†*. If Men will not believe this Revelation, in this Particular, but pervert its plain Meaning, tho' expressed in variety of Phrases, and repeated a thousand times over, by vain and groundless Criticisms, and darken Truth by Words without Knowledge; it is their own Act, and their own Fault, and the Consequence be to themselves. They cannot, with any reason, reproach their Creator, as if he had not done his part, in setting before them while they were in their State of Probation, that the Wages of Sin is Death, eternal Exclusion from his heavenly Kingdom, and an everlasting State of Punishment with the Devil and his Angels. And it is methinks something surprizing, that Christians should make such a Doubt of this matter, with the plain Declarations of the Gospel lying open before them, since it was a Doctrine commonly received, even by the Heathens. *Socrates ‡*, (from whom, by the bye, rather than from the

N 3

Gospel,

* 2 Tim. i. 10. † Rom. i. 18.

‡ In Plato's Phædon. p. 178. Ed. Cant.

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Gospel, Mr. *W.* seems to have borrowed his *Division* of Mankind) plainly supposes that some Sinners, such as have been guilty of great and repeated Acts of Sacrilege, Murder, or the like, will be judged *incurable*, and condemned to Hell, (ὅθεν ἔποτο ἐκβαίνουσιν) from which they will never be delivered. But it is foreign to the Point in hand, to collect the Authorities to this purpose. And it is, in some measure, done already, in Mr. *Ray's* Discourse, which I referred to above. Bishop *Butler*, as usual, represents this matter in a fine Light. “Gentile Writers, says he *, both Moralists and Poets speak of the future Punishment of the wicked both as to the Duration and Degree of it, in a like manner of Expression and of Description, as the Scripture does; so that all which can positively be asserted to be matter of mere Revelation, with regard to this Doctrine, seems to be, that the great Distinction between the righteous and the wicked, shall be made at the End of this World; that each shall *then* receive according to his Deserts. Reason did, as it well might, conclude that it should, finally and upon the whole, be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked: But it could not be determined upon any Principles of Reason, whether human Creatures might not have been appointed to pass through other States of Life and Being before that distributive Justice should finally and effectually take place. Revelation teaches

* Analogy of Religion, &c. p. 39, 40.

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“ us, that the next State of Things after the present, is appointed for the Execution of this Justice ; that it shall be no longer delayed : But *the Mystery of God*, the great Mystery of his suffering Vice and Confusion to prevail, *shall then be finished* ; and He will *take to him his great Power and will reign*, by rendering “ to every one according to his Works.” This great Point Christians are now assur’d of, with all the Clearness imaginable ; and if they miscarry in their main Pursuit by depending on something else, the Blame will lie at their own door. Again,

As Men were sufficiently apprized of this Constitution of Things, of these Consequences of a wicked Life, or what is the same in other Words, of the Perpetuity of future Punishments ; *so they were at liberty, and had it in their power to avoid them.* It is implied in the very Notion of a State of Trial, that as it must administer Occasions to try our Virtue, so it must furnish us with all necessary Means to secure it : For when Men are really tried above their Strength, it is, in the Account of Morality, no Trial at all. So much seems to be clear, *à priori*, from the very Nature of a State of Probation. And if we attend to our own, we shall find it to be the Case in fact. It is evidently in our power to avoid all such gross Acts, and all such Habits of Vice, at least, as will in the end prove absolutely fatal. It is in our power, not to contract any evil Habits at all. And tho’ when they are contracted,

and are become inveterate and of long standing, it is with great difficulty that they are relinquished ; yet may even *This* be done, at least in ordinary Cases, by the Grace of God, and a willing Mind. But suppose the worst, that it is possible for Men to destroy their natural Liberty, and by a long Custom of sinning render themselves incapable of Amendment : still it is to be remembered, that they were not born with this Incapacity, but purchased it at the Expence of great Industry in the Trade of Vice ; in opposition to the repeated Admonitions of their own Consciences, and of the Spirit of Grace. This fatal Subjection to Sin is the Fruit and Effect of a long and voluntary Service. This Case therefore, supposing it a *real* one, is nothing to the purpose ; and being set aside, I say Men have sufficient power to avoid all such Courses, as will bring upon them these eternal Punishments. No Temptations befall them, but such, (due Care presupposed on their part,) as the Providence of God will preserve them under, or make a way for them to escape from. If they fall, they may rise again ; if they be overtaken in a Fault, they may recover ; Repentance is a Remedy, allow'd and provided by the very Terms of the Christian Covenant ; which does not require Perfection from Man, which he is not capable of here, but Sincerity and Honesty of Heart, which he is. One would think there should be no need to observe such obvious things as these. And yet the Writers on the other side seem wholly inattentive to them, when they represent the

the Case, as if Men were to be damn'd for Weaknesses inherent in their Nature, or Temptations foreign to it; that is, in both Cases, for something which they cannot help. Hear how piteously Mr. *W.* laments the Condition of poor Mankind, upon the Supposition that *much the greatest Part of them must inevitably be damned, for endless Ages of Ages, for all the infinite Ages of Eternity; "and all this for the Sins of this short Life; fallen into generally by the secret Snares of the Devil, and other violent Temptations; which they commonly could not wholly either prevent, or avoid."* (P. 18, 19.) I am concern'd at present only with the latter Part of this Sentence, which seems to proceed entirely upon Mistake. No Man was ever damned, nor ever will be, upon account of the Snares of the Devil, (the Guilt of those be upon his own Head,) nor for any Temptations whatever, which he could not avoid; but solely for his own wilful Wickedness, and that too unrepented of. Besides, if there be any Temptations which Men cannot either wholly *prevent*, or *avoid*; still may they not *resist* them? Or, if they cannot resist the Temptation, (which however to suppose, is not very consistent with any Religion, nor ever supposed that I know of in Scripture, but much to the contrary,) cannot they repent of the Sin, into which the Temptation led them, and avoid *that*, for the future? If they can do none of these things, they seem not to be the proper Subjects either of Reward or Punishment; and so are not at all concern'd in the Argument before

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before us. But the truth is, Temptations hurt no Man, any farther than he makes them his own Act and Deed. And he is then only tempted in moral Account, or so as it shall be imputed to him for Sin, *when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed. Then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin: And Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth Death.* Jam. i. 14, 15. And therefore the Temptations of the Devil are never urged in Scripture, as Mr. W. urges them here, in excuse, or alleviation, of Men's Wickedness; but in aggravation of it. So the Devil enter'd into *Judas*, when his own wicked and corrupt Heart was become a fit Habitation for him, and the Man was ready to execute every thing that the Fiend could suggest. So in the Case of *Ananias* and his Wife, *Acts* v. St. Peter says, *why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the Price of the Land?* The Intent of which Question is not to excuse *Ananias*, by throwing the blame upon the Devil that tempted him; but it is a severe Rebuke to *Ananias* himself, whose wicked and corrupt Heart had render'd him capable of being influenced in such a manner, and to such an Action. In a word, Men are to answer for the *Talents* which they had, and not for the *Talents* which they had not*.

Where

* Men may, *materially*, transgress their Duty, through want of Knowledge, or Power, to do better: But this perhaps is not often the Case, especially with regard to the great Duties of Life. Nam fere etiam ii, qui peccant, et si non perfecte, tamen quid sit bonum & malum sentiunt; &

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Where Ignorance of a Law, or Incapacity to obey it, can be truly pleaded, and not pretended only, no doubt but the Plea will be admitted : This is but Reason, and Equity. So that the Point at last will come evidently to this, that Men shall be punish'd only for the Sins which they might have avoided : Which again ends in this, that they had it in their power to avoid the Punishment. Nay, (besides what was before observed, that the Punishments are so particularly declared and denounced, on purpose that they may be avoided ; besides the many Motives and Inducements to Virtue from the Beauty and Worth of it, from temporal Conveniences, Health, Reputation, Happiness, at least, *within*, &c. Besides all this,) Men are allured and invited to avoid these Punishments, by the Promises of eternal Life and Glory. For,

As eternal Punishment is threaten'd on the one hand, so eternal Life and Happiness is promised on the other. This Consideration is of some weight, as the Case is render'd thereby much fairer and more equal, than if Men were liable to an eternal State of Punishment, while the Rewards set before them were only temporal. " It cannot be denied, says Archbishop *Dawes*,
" that

& quoties aliquid improbe faciunt, peccare se sciunt, & ideo celare nituntur. Sed cum eos boni & mali natura non fallat, cupiditate mala vincuntur, ut peccant ; quia deest illis virtus, id est, Cupiditas recte & honesta faciendi. *Lactant. Ed. Oxon. p. 514.*

— Recte Voluntas prava, & vitiosus animus, quem excusare Ignoratio non potest, punietur. *Ibid.*

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“ that the Eternity of the Joys of Heaven,
 “ makes the Belief of the Eternity of the Tor-
 “ ments of Hell fit much easier upon our Minds,
 “ than it would *otherwise* have done. Had the
 “ Eternity been only on the *punishing* side,
 “ this would have look’d hard, and not alto-
 “ gether agreeable to our Notions of the Divine
 “ Goodness; But, being on the *rewarding* side
 “ likewise, we have here infinite Goodness and
 “ infinite Justice set one against the other ; and
 “ what reason can any Man possibly have to
 “ complain of this? Nay, the very Eternity of
 “ the Joys of Heaven is an Intimation, and kind
 “ of presumptive Proof of the Eternity of the
 “ Torments of Hell : Inasmuch as we are
 “ sure that God is every whit as much an Ene-
 “ my to Vice, as he is a Friend to Virtue, and
 “ have therefore all the reason that can be to
 “ expect, that he will exert himself every whit
 “ as much, in the punishing of the one, as in
 “ the rewarding of the other.” (See more to
 this purpose in his *fifth Sermon*, p. 159, &c.)

BUT I the more readily take notice of this
 Observation, because Mr. *Whiston* has attack’d
 the Foundation of it *. He has denied the
 common Faith of Christians, in a Point, which,
 I conceive, enters into the very Essence of
 the Christian Covenant, *the Life everlasting*.
 Here therefore, if any where, I must exchange
 a few Words with him, (and a few, one would
 think, should be sufficient,) upon this Subject.

In

* Compare what is said under N° XXII.

of Future Punishment. 189

In *John* iii. 14, &c. our Lord says, *And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal Life. For God so loved the World, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* Here we must understand the word *perish*, (ἀπόλλυται) either in the sense of *ceasing to exist*, or in the sense of being *condemn'd*. If we take it in the former sense, and render ζῶν ἀιώνιον, (as Mr. W. always renders it,) *lasting Life*, we make our Lord's Discourse wholly inconclusive:—*He shall not perish, or be annihilated, but have lasting Life.* But every one sees here is no just Opposition, no Sense in this; for he may have this *lasting Life*, and *perish* too; (as he must do when this *lasting Life* is at an end,) and therefore our Lord can never be suppos'd to talk in this manner. If we take the word, (as we must take it,) in the latter sense, our Lord's Discourse will amount to this,—*So God loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not be condemn'd, but have lasting Life* *. Here indeed is some Sense; but poor and low, in comparison of what it is in the common

* There seems to be no *just Opposition* in the Words even in this sense: For when this *lasting Life* is over, as it will some time be, they will be condemn'd to be annihilated; the Apprehensions of which all along, (if they know any thing of the matter,) will be a Punishment in proportion to the Greatness of the Happiness they are to lose.

mon Translation. Our Lord is magnifying his Father's Love to Mankind, which was so great that *he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should have everlasting Life.* Here is a Gift worthy of the Goodness of God to bestow, and worthy of the Wisdom of God to convey through his *only begotten Son* *: *The Gift of God is eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. vi. 23. There is a like Representation of this matter, equally plain and strong, *John x. 28, 29. I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all: And none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* We deprive these words of their Beauty and Force, if we suppose, with Mr. W. that notwithstanding *none is able to pluck them out of the Hand of the Father, and the Son,* yet at last they will of themselves drop out, as it were, into nothing. But this important Point does not rest upon two or three single Passages. It is expressed throughout the New Testament in the strongest Language. *This mortal shall put on Immortality,— then shall Death be swallowed up in Victory †:— Neither can they die any more ||.* It is a poor Evasion to say, that they shall only die no more in the same sense and manner of dying as they did before, but still they may die in the sense of ceasing to exist

✱ *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32.

† 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.

|| Luke xx. 36.

exist for ever. This is making *the Oracles of God* more ambiguous, more equivocating and deceitful, than the Heathen Oracles. No, they will never cease to exist, and to be happy; being in possession of *an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away*: 1 Pet. i. 4. In possession of *the Kingdom prepared for them from the Foundation of the World*: Matt. xxv. 34. Which Kingdom is an *everlasting Kingdom*;—and they shall reign for ever and ever: Rev. xxii. 5. Compare Dan. vii. 18. It is the Kingdom of Christ, and of God the Father. See the Note concerning *Doxologies*, No XXII. What St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xv. 24. about Christ's *delivering up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*, is not at all inconsistent with this everlasting Kingdom, in which He, and his Saints shall reign for ever and ever. The mediatorial Kingdom, the Kingdom of Grace, the Kingdom which He govern'd in a particular manner, while He was subduing all opposite *Rule, Authority and Power*, and putting *all Enemies under his feet*, will then be at an end: But there is still the Kingdom of Glory, into which He introduces his Redeemed; and of this Kingdom there shall be no End. (*Nic. Creed, Luke i. 33.*)

As this has been the common Faith of Christians, from the Commencement of the Christian Name, whoever ventures to oppose it, ought, one would think, to have some good Argument to produce against it. Let us now examine Mr. *Whiston's*. All that he suggests in point of Reason

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Reason is to this effect *; that if any Creatures are to exist for ever, they will be *co-eternal* with their infinite and everlasting Creator; that this is *an amazing Co-eternity*; “and has long seemed to him too vast and immense a thing to be expected, not only by us, poor, imperfect, sinful Mortals; perhaps the very lowest of all rational Beings in the whole Scale of Creation; but by any finite and subordinate Creatures whatsoever.” As to the first Suggestion, where, I beseech you, is the Absurdity in believing that some Creatures shall be *co-eternal*, that is, of equal Continuance in Being, as to all future Duration, with God himself? Does this make them in any manner to *equal*, or *rival*, God? Or put them in a State independent of him? By no means. It was He who *created* them *immortal*, and made them *to be the Images of his own Eternity* †. And they are but Images of it still. *His* is supreme and underived, extending both ways (*à parte ante*, as well as *à parte post*,) from Everlasting to Everlasting. *Their's* is only commensurate with all Duration to come, depending all the while upon God, and subordinate to Him, *who only*, in the supreme sense, *bath Immortality*. What then is there *amazing* in such a *Co-eternity*, which reserves to God his divine Prerogative, and makes no Incroachment upon any Perfection of *the infinite and everlasting Creator* ||?

There

* See p. 23, 64, 75, 89. † Wisd. ii. 23.

|| To what Purpose, or with what Consistency, does Mr. *Whiston* heap up Texts and Testimonies of Scripture, for

There is no Envy in God, that he should be jealous of his Creatures approaching too near him. And they will ever, in their highest Exaltation, be infinitely below him. And as there is no want of Goodness in the Deity, so neither is there of Power, to preserve them in Being, and in the Enjoyment of their virtuous Happiness, to everlasting Ages. There is no Contradiction in the Nature of the thing; it is a real Object of Power, is what *may* be done: And, taking all the divine Perfections into Consideration, it is reasonable to think it certainly *will*. No, says Mr. *W.* *it is too vast and immense a thing to be expected, not only by us poor, sinful Mortals, but by any Creatures whatsoever.* Here he seems to rest the Point upon the *Incapacity* of the Creature. But why reasonable Creatures, especially the most valuable, excellent and noble of all God's Creatures, may not expect the Privilege of Immortality, when they consider the Nature of God, the Declarations of his Will, the Constitution of their own Nature, and the moral Fitness and Reason of Things, I cannot imagine. If they will

for ten or a dozen Pages together, to magnify the Goodness, Compassion, and tender Mercies of God towards his Creatures? This gloomy *Hypothesis* of final universal Destruction defaces all. What can be said worse of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Deity, what can represent his Character in a more unamiable Light, than saying that He will at last destroy the noblest Works of his own hands, *the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and the innumerable Company of Angels, that stand round about his Throne;* (not to go any higher;) because, otherwise they would be *co-eternal* with Himself; and that *is too vast and immense a thing* for them to expect?

O

will not expect, what God has, in all these ways, given them reason to expect; this is not an Argument of their Humility, but of their Baseness: They reject the Counsel of God against themselves, and judge themselves unworthy, and incapable, of everlasting Life. As for our being *poor, imperfect, and sinful Mortals*; it should have been remember'd, that whatever we are at present, *it does not yet appear what we shall be**; only we know that the time will come, when *this corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this mortal shall put on Immortality†. And every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he (God) is pure.* It is much to be lamented that Mr. *Whiston* should weaken this Motive; and in his Zeal to reform the present Systems of Faith, should make such cruel Inroads not only into the Doctrine of the Gospel, but into natural Religion itself, as to deny the Immortality of the Soul, and an everlasting State of Retribution.

SINCE then Men were thoroughly apprized of the fatal Consequences of a wicked Life, and not only had it in their power, but were encouraged and invited, by the Promises of *an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, to avoid them; it follows, that if they *do* incur these Punishments, they incur them *voluntarily*, and as the Effect of their *own Choice and Option*. The Meaning of this is not that Men chuse Misery, or Evil, especially eternal Misery, as such:

For

* 1 John iii. 2, 3. † 1 Cor. xv. 53.

of Future Punishment. 195

For so consider'd, it can be the Object of no Choice. Were eternal Happiness and Misery propos'd to Men's Option abstractedly in themselves, not clogged with any Terms or Conditions whatsoever, they must certainly, in a popular manner of speaking, *chuse* the former. But truly and properly there would be no *Choice* at all, as that implies any thing of Difficulty, or Trial, or moral Merit in chusing the *good Part*. This therefore, in the very Nature and Reason of Things, cannot be the Case in a State of Probation; in which God *tries*, or *proves*, his Creatures, that He may know, (that is, that it may be known, that it may plainly appear,) what is in their Hearts, and how they will act. And if this cannot be the Case, what Constitution of Things would you expect, or require, to answer this purpose, but such an one as we actually find in fact? In which, Things are so contrived, Good and Evil, natural and moral, are so mixed and adjusted, that Men are by no means *necessitated* to chuse either the one, or the other; but are left to such a free Exercise of their Liberty, in the Determination of their Elections, as renders them strictly of moral Consideration. A State of Happiness, or Misery, immutable and final, is fairly propos'd to them; that is, they really have their Choice of them; not immediately and absolutely, without any Conditions, but as depending on the Choice how they will lead their Lives. It is too little to say, that in forming this most important Election they are intirely *free*; they are, moreover, excited to form

it right, by all the Motives and Arguments which can influence the Hearts of reasonable Creatures. No Expedient, one may say, has been left unattempted, but all Engines have been set to work, to induce them to chuse *that good Part, which shall not be taken away from them* *. It is on this footing that the Scriptures always represent Men's Destruction, as proceeding from themselves. They sow to themselves in Wickedness, and they reap the Fruit of their own Elections. How can this be prevented? They must not be deprived of this elective Power, and render'd incapable of either Virtue or Vice. And the Nature of things cannot be so destroy'd, or confounded, as to hinder the Consequences from taking place, or to make them reap what they did not sow. I add farther, that

THE Misery which they thus bring upon themselves, so far from supposing God to delight in Cruelty and Barbarity, (*the most savage Cruelty and Barbarity possible* †,) is inflicted by Him, or rather is executed in the natural Consequences of things, without any Emotions of Anger, Rage, or Fury; but as the Effect of Justice, and Wisdom, and Goodness itself; and therefore fixes no Imputation of Cruelty, Injustice, or Tyranny upon God. The Punishments are, in no sense or degree, the Effects of Malice, Revenge, or a tyrannical Humour, or of any Passions whatsoever; (none of which are in God;) so that there is no reason to suspect that they will be excessive or

* *Luke* x. 42.† *Mr. W.* p. 137.

or unjust, or beyond what Reason and Truth require. The *Letter-Writer*, whom I mentioned before, insists upon this Principle, and thinks it of advantage to his Cause. "If Divine Justice, he says*, is not really attended, either with Hatred, Fury, or Revenge, but is inseparable from infinite Goodness; can we conceive it will condemn Millions of Creatures, form'd after God's Image, to dreadful and never-ending Misery; and even doom them to the Hatred of God, to Rage, to Despair, and Blasphemy for all Eternity?" This Writer should have consider'd, that *Divine Justice, which is inseparable from infinite Goodness, and which he compares to a perfectly equal Balance, which inclines to one side only by the Force of the Weight put into one Scale*, being, on the *Supposition*, entirely free from all Passion, could condemn them, at first †, to nothing but what

* *Letter I.* What he here says about *Millions of Creatures*, is agreeable to his constant manner of representing the Case. The *Miserable* are always with him *Myriads*, and the like; in comparison of whom the *Blessed* in Heaven are but a *Handful of Men*, a *small Number of the Elect*: In which Representation there is no sense.

† The Judge of the World will say to the Wicked at the last Day, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, &c. And they shall go away into everlasting Punishment.* We agree that neither this Sentence, nor the Execution of it, is the Effect of Passion. Can this be of any advantage to *his Cause*? Can there be any reason to reverse a Sentence, pronounced so righteously? Or to put a stop to the Execution of what is awarded by pure Justice, and Truth itself, without the Mixture of any Passion, or wrong Bias whatsoever? The only way by which any Release, or Relief, can come, must be by their *Amendment*; which

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what was just and right: And as there was nothing done in the first Allotment of their State but what was *just and right*, Justice can see no reason to alter it, any more than the Balance can alter its Determination, while the Weight continues as it did before. If their Punishment was the Result of Passion, it might alter; for what is more changeable than Passion? But when it proceeds from immutable Principles, the infinite Perfections of God, and the eternal Reasons of Things, it will be as immutable as they are; unless the Reason of the Case, (the Weight in the Scale,) should be alter'd, by a Change of the moral Character of the Creatures concerned; which we have no reason to expect. But this Author, by an odd Confusion of Ideas, at the same time that he is supposing no Passions in God, seems to represent him as if he acted passionately, and *doomed* his Creatures to a more *dreadful* State of Misery than they deserved, or than Divine Justice, which is inseparable from infinite Goodness, will permit. Upon this Supposition it is reasonable to presume, that when his Passion abated, or his Revenge was gratified, he would contrive some Method to relieve them. But *this* is by no means the Case. Nor is the Author consistent with himself, when he represents *Divine Justice* as *dooming them to the Hatred of God, &c.* For in the Paragraph immediately before, he goes so far as to say, "the Torments it seems to inflict upon Sinners, do

" not

I have said something to already, and must consider more minutely in the next Chapter, when I come to examine this Author's System of the *Restoration*.

“ not proceed from *Justice*, but from *themselves*,
“ who *lay up Treasures of Wrath*, Rom. ii.
“ They alone feed the *Worm*, that must gnaw
“ them, and pile up combustible Materials for
“ the *Fire* that must burn them.” It is certain
that it was not God, but *themselves*, who were
the Cause of their *Hatred of God*: And if this
which was their Crime, continues to be their
Punishment, it is no more than what is agree-
able to the Constitution of Things, and the
Appointment of Providence, which makes Sin
the Punishment of itself.

WHEN these Considerations are laid together,
and are allow'd their due Weight, without Pre-
judice or Passion; nothing more, I conceive,
will be needful to defend our Doctrine, or make
it appear consistent with Reason: For that, it is
to be remember'd, is the point in view; not to
prove it *from* Reason, but to reconcile it *with*
it, and with our natural Notions of God's Per-
fections. The proper *Proof* arises from the Scrip-
tures; to them we appeal'd, and by them we
must be determin'd; provided only that the Case
be not, in the very Nature of it, incapable of
Proof, by being plainly absurd, or contradictory
to some clear Principle of Reason. This, I
think, is not the Case of the Doctrine of the
Eternity of future Punishment. It appears to
be consistent at least with Reason; and if Rea-
son does not gainsay or contradict it, and Scrip-
ture asserts and teaches it, we can reasonably ask

no more *. The latter of these Points is consider'd in the two former Chapters, and the first in the present. If the Principles laid down be true, I think they are sufficient to justify the Conduct of Providence on this head. And our Adversaries themselves, one or other of them, bear testimony to the Truth of all, or most of them; as might be prov'd, if that was necessary, from their own plain Concessions. Even the *first*, which is as it were the Pillar and Ground of all, is allow'd by Mr. *Whiston*; and must, in consistency with themselves, by all who are in the *Hypothesis* of Annihilation: Because it cannot be conceiv'd that God would annihilate any intelligent Beings, if they were good for any thing, or capable of being made better. It is possible therefore for them to become, in the moral sense of the Expression, *Salt that hath lost its Savour* †; incorrigibly, and incurably wicked, and beyond all Recovery utterly depraved for ever.

THE Objections against this Doctrine, are founded chiefly upon Mistakes concerning it; and Men are prejudiced against it, because it is not fairly represented to them. Sometimes it is pretended

* This makes it very different from the Case of *Transubstantiation*, with which our Adversaries affect to compare it: See *Burnet*, p. 302. *Whiston*, p. 2. *Transubstantiation* is plainly contrary to Sense and Reason, and is built upon one *figurative* Expression of Scripture: The Doctrine here asserted is not contrary to Sense or Reason, is taught in Variety of plain Expressions, and countenanced by the whole Tenor of Scripture.

† See N^o XXXVIII.

pretended that Men are damned for Temptations which they could not avoid, or for Infirmities which they could not help; in short, for any thing, rather than their own wilful Wickedness, and their own impenitent Hearts. Every thing is raked together, to lessen, and in a manner, to annihilate the Guilt of human Wickedness. Yet Sin is of ill desert; and if there be any thing that can make Sin itself become *more exceeding sinful*, it is all included in *Christian Sin*, as the Gospel contains the whole Counsel of God, in the Dispensation of Jesus Christ, to prevent it. Sometimes our Doctrine is represented as if it *supposed* God to delight in Cruelty and Barbarity, as damning his Creatures by Acts of Power and Dominion, without any regard to Mercy, or even Justice. Whereas it supposes no such thing; but, on the contrary, that he did every thing that became his Character, to save them; that they destroyed themselves; and reap the Fruit of their own Doings, unavoidably, and in the natural Consequences of things. He has no delight in their Sufferings, which he would have prevented; but that, tho' they are contrary to his original Design, he can make them serve to no good Purpose, can bring no Good out of this Evil, is more than ought to be said, because it is a great deal more than can be proved. It is pretended that this Constitution of things, in which so many of his Creatures become finally miserable, is inconsistent with the Justice, and Wisdom, and Goodness of God: Foreseeing that so many of them would mis-

carry,

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carry, He had better have laid aside his Scheme, and desisted from creating them. But it should be considered, whether this would not restrain God from creating any free Beings at all: For it is not Liberty enjoyed only in such a Degree, or such a Situation as Men are placed in, that may be abused, but Beings of another Order, and placed in different Circumstances, may equally pervert it; and fall by that means from their *first Estate, into the Condemnation of the Devil*. It is evident, that let what Numbers you please miscarry, if this was so far from being *necessary*, or what they were unavoidably and fatally subjected to, that they had a fair and free Choice of everlasting Happiness, (the same which even they had who actually partake of it) there can be no Injustice done them; nothing, inconsistent with the *Justice* of God. And his *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, we may be confident, can contrive no Scheme, but what, upon the whole, it will be much better to execute, than to lay aside. The Good will be much greater than the Evil, and Happiness finally, and upon the whole, vastly prepollent. Must this Scheme then be defeated, because some of the Individuals, it is foreseen, will make themselves miserable, and with regard to them merely, it were good if the Scheme had been dropped? But this cannot come to pass without their own most unreasonable Perverseness; and shall that defeat so glorious a Design? Surely I may venture to say, without any Danger, or Imputation, of Rashness, that it is consistent with every Perfection in God to
create

create free Beings, (Angels or Men,) tho' He foresees some of them will make themselves so miserable, that with reference merely to their single Case, it had been better if they had not been created. But to blacken our Doctrine more, and render it more odious, the Numbers of those who miscarry, in comparison of such as are saved, are magnified sometimes beyond all the Bounds of Reason and Truth. I have had occasion to take notice of This, more than once already *. But I would here ask, upon what Scripture, Reason, or Experience, this Representation is founded? The Question, *Are there few that be saved?* was once put to our Lord himself: *Luke xiii. 23.* But He declin'd giving any direct Answer to a matter of such Curiosity, in which the *Querist* had no concern. He thought it of more consequence to give them this useful Admonition, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.* That is, I suppose, because they sought only, and did not *strive*; or did not *strive lawfully*, seeking to enter by undue means, or when it was too late: For the Miscarriage, I presume, must be charged upon themselves, or else it would be but a poor Encouragement to others to *strive to enter in.* And indeed it appears clearly from the subsequent Verses that this was the Case: These *Seekers* have nothing to plead in their behalf, but some external Advantages, or Relation; but were *Workers of Iniquity*, when they should have been *working out their Salvation*;

* See N^o VI. and XX.

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Salvation; and apply for Admission after *the Master of the House hath shut to the Door*. However, tho' these are excluded, (and very justly,) our Lord declares that others shall come from all Quarters of the World, *from the East and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God: &c. 29.* Our Lord had given the same Admonition in his Sermon on the Mount, *Matt. vii. 13, 14.* enforced, as some may think, with a plainer and more full Declaration, that *Few*, in comparison, will be finally saved. *Enter ye in at the strait Gate; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* Here indeed seems to be an express Declaration, that *Few* only find the narrow Way that leadeth unto *Life*, while *many* go in the broad one that leadeth to *Destruction*: And if these Words refer to the final Determination at the Day of Judgment, with regard to all Mankind; the Dispute as to this Point is fairly at an end. But they appear plainly to be only a Declaration of what was the State of the World, and the Practice of Mankind, in our Saviour's own time. It was not usual with Him, nor agreeable to his Manner of Instruction, to meddle with Points of so curious and high a nature as the former; and decide, as it were, the Fate of the Christian World, before it was born. And if He would give no direct Answer

to

to the *Querist* in St. Luke, is it likely, that *here*, in his publick Doctrine, he would tell all that heard him, that far the greatest Part of those who should *hereafter* believe in him, would finally be damned? But He might properly enough take notice of a Matter of Fact, the Wickedness and Infidelity of the *Jews* at that time. He was himself the *Door* and the *Way* that led to Life, and few of the *Jews* went in thereat, or found it. One great Reason of this is intimated in the very next *Verse*, *Beware of false Prophets, which come to you, &c.* Of these our Lord says, *ſ. 20. By their Fruits ye ſhall know them.* That is, as I understand it, not so much by their bad Lives, (for possibly they might make a very specious Appearance in their *Sheeps Cloathing*,) as by the immoral Tendency, the natural pernicious Consequences and Effects, of their Principles and Doctrines. Thus, for instance, if they taught that Men might be saved without Virtue and Holiness, upon the account of their being of this or that Sect or Party, of this or the other Profession, of Religion, the Posterity of such a Patriarch, or the Followers of such a Prophet; the natural Consequence of this being destructive of the Practice of Virtue and true Religion, would make it evident that, whatever they appeared to be, they were in reality *false Prophets*. Thus therefore our Lord goes on, *ſ. 21. Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: No external Profession, no Relation to Christ, the Son of God, himself, will avail any thing,*

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thing, without *doing the Will of his Father which is in Heaven*. Then follows, *ſ. 22.* a Key to the whole ; *Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name? And in thy Name have caſt out Devils? And in thy Name done many wonderful Works?* The Plea is more frivolous in *St. Luke*, but proceeds upon the ſame Bottom ; — *We have eaten and drunk in thy Preſence, and thou haſt taught in our Streets: Ch. xiii. ſ. 26.* From which it is plain, that in both places, our Lord had in his eye the Caſe of that Age ; and has determined nothing about the Queſtion, whether *Few*, out of the whole Chriſtian World, will be ſaved at the laſt Day.

A N D if he has not determin'd it here, I am not aware that either He or his Apoſtles have done it, in any other Paſſage of the New Teſtament. There is a moſt magnificent Deſcription, *Apoc. vii.* of the Number of the Bleſſed ; where after the *ſealing of the hundred and forty and four thouſand*, out of the *Tribes of Iſrael* ; the Apoſtle adds, *ſ. 9.* *After this, I beheld, and lo, a great Multitude, which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, ſtood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, Salvation to our God which ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb.* The Letter-Writer above never thought, I preſume, of this Paſſage, when he every where represents thoſe
that

that shall be saved, as a *Handful of Men, a small Number of the Elect*. As Scripture gives us no warrant for such a Conclusion, so neither does Reason or Experience. One half of our Species die, perhaps, before they have actually committed any Sin to *deserve the Damnation of Hell*; and therefore by the Mercy of God, and the Merits of his Son, it may be reasonably hoped that they will *escape* it. And as to the rest, whoever thus damns the Majority, must say that the far greater Number of the Christian World, in all Ages of it, lived and died impenitently wicked: A Point, which I find myself in no disposition at present, either to confute, or believe.

THESE are some of the Misrepresentations of our Doctrine, on which Prejudices are raised, and Objections formed against it. Another thing always mention'd on this Subject is the *Shortness of Human Life*; the Sins of which can bear no proportion to Punishments of endless Duration *. Now, suppose human Life as long as it

* See this Objection largely consider'd in Archbishop Dawes's *Seventh Sermon*, p. 232—40.

I hardly know where the *Stress* of this Objection is laid: Whether on the Shortness of the *present Term of Life*, or on *this*, that no *temporary* Sins, of whatsoever Duration, ought to be punish'd with *eternal* Torments. But take both; as thus—It is unjust and cruel to punish *temporary Sins* with *eternal Misery*, and it is *more* unjust, and *more* cruel *so* to punish the Sins of *our short Life*: Still, I say, if the Considerations, offer'd above be true, the Objection is fully answer'd by them. It was *best* upon the whole, that is, *greater Good* was produced by it, that God should

it was in the Beginning, *almost a thousand Years*; the Plea of Disproportion would still subsist; for even a thousand Yars bear no proportion to the Days of Eternity. And yet I suppose a moral Agent in a State of Probation, may behave in such a manner, in much less time than that, as to affect his whole future Existence. He may forfeit, irretrievably, that State of Happiness, to which another Course of Behaviour would have entitled him; and he must take the Consequences of that other State, which he has fitted himself for, and into which he departs by a sort of natural Congruity. Here then some of the Principles we laid down, in the former Part of this Chapter, come into play. If a Character be form'd incurably evil, where is the difference whether it was done in a *little*, or a *long*, time? If it be said, that if he had lived longer, he might have repented; it is as easily answer'd, that this is arguing in the dark. And we have, at least,

as

should establish the present System, or Constitution of Things, than the contrary. Agreeably to this Constitution, such certain Consequences will follow such a Course of Behaviour. Men knew this; they were forewarned of it; nay, they were intreated, invited, pressed by all sorts of Motives, to take another course. Still they persist, and die in their Sins. Death does not convert them, nor change their Wills; they continue the same evil Beings; and tho' the Acts of Corruption (I use the Terms of a Distinction made use of by the Letter-Writer,) may be restrain'd in them, yet the Source of it, or Corruption itself, still remains. This is one natural Source of their eternal Misery: And in this sense, their Sin is as eternal as their Punishment; that by refusing to repent during their Probation, while they had liberty and power to do so, they have brought themselves into a State, where Repentance is hid from their Eyes.

as much reason to say, that it was an Act of Mercy to take him away soon, that he might not *treasure up* to himself a greater Degree of Misery. But I conceive these things are rather above our Sphere, and that human Ignorance is Answer enough to any Objections, which proceed only upon Difficulties of this kind. We know, in general, that when the Term of Life was longer, Men were far from being the better for it; and that the Shortness, as well as Uncertainty of Life, is an Argument to lead Men to Repentance. But that all Futurity should depend upon this short Life, our Adversaries tell us, is the hardship. And yet they are at a loss to tell us how it should be otherwise. Those of them who are for retrieving Matters in *the intermediate State*, are confuted by others, who shew that *that* State is not calculated for the Practice of Virtue or Vice, so as that they may change the Habits of the one, or the other, with which they left this World. Besides, it is contrary to the Scripture; which always makes the Sentence at the last Day turn upon Men's Conduct *here*, and the Actions. which they did *in the Body* *. And they who are for Amendment in Hell, are likewise contradicted by their Fellow-Labourers, who say, (and they say truly,) that in *Gebenna*, or Hell, there is no Repentance.

THUS far, in conclusion, I am willing to own to them; that *whenever* the wicked repent truly, so as to change their Dispositions and
P Temper,

* See *Burnet de Statu Mort. Cap. iv. omnino.*

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Temper, it will, in the nature of things, be the better for them. For a virtuous Temper is not only a Foundation for Happiness, but is itself a considerable Part of it. But then, at the same time, even upon *this*, (which is *their own*) Supposition of Reformation, it will not follow, that they will be made Partakers of that Happiness, and that heavenly Kingdom, which they were shut out of at the Day of Judgment. No, some Privileges, some Opportunities *once* lost, may be lost *for ever*. So that still much depends upon this Life, *short* as it is: So that I cannot forbear thinking that this *Disproportion*, so much talk'd of, is a very fallacious Rule to judge by, in this momentous Affair.

I SHALL not here more minutely pursue any other particular Objections. They are all obviated, I conceive, by what has been said; or may be answer'd by a right Application of the Principles discuss'd above. They are in a great measure answer'd only by a fair Representation of our Doctrine, as they mostly proceed from Mistakes concerning it. When understood rightly, and consider'd without Prejudice or Passion, Men have less to say against it than they imagin'd. It is implied in the very Notion of Religion, that a Distinction will some time be made between the Righteous and the Wicked. This Distinction will be made solemnly and perfectly at the Day of Judgment; when the Righteous shall enter into that Kingdom of Glory and Happiness, which was prepared for them from the Beginning

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who

who have despised and trampled upon them all. Here Scripture closes the Scene, and shuts out all Hope, or Prospect of Redemption, or Deliverance. But vain Men, affecting to appear wiser, or better than God, have taken upon them to teach, without any warrant from his Word, that to the Damned also shall sometime be given the *Knowledge of Salvation, by the Remission of their Sins* *. What they have to offer for this Scheme, and how well they defend it, I am to consider more distinctly in the next Chapter.

* *Luke i. 77.*

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

Concerning the System of the Restoration, or Re-establishment.

I HAVE hitherto been employ'd in maintaining our own Tenets ; I must now advance as it were into the Enemy's Country, and examine how they defend their's. If the Punishment of the Wicked in the other World, is ever to have an end, it must be because they are either deliver'd from it, and restored to a State of Happiness; or else because they are reduced to nothing. As there are two ways then by which this Change may be effected, I desire the Patrons of a Restoration to consider, in the first place, that tho' they could disprove our Doctrine, yet that does by no means directly prove their own. Supposing, for once, that eternal Punishment is unjust and impossible ; it does not thereby follow, that the Punishment in Hell will be exchanged for a State of Happiness ; for it may end in a State of neither Happiness nor Misery, viz. total Extinction of Being. We expect therefore direct and positive Proofs, from Scripture or Reason, of their System of the Re-establishment ; over and above what they offer against the Doctrine of eternal Torments. They raise a great clamour against this Doctrine, how unjust and cruel it is, and how inconsistent with the Perfections of God ! Be it so ; it is still in-

cumbent upon them to prove, beyond this, that the Perfections of God require of Him, not only that he put an end to their Misery, but that he restore them to Happiness, and his Favour: Or, at least, that this is agreeable to his Perfections, and what may reasonably be expected from them; or what he has declar'd in his Word. If this had always been consider'd by some particular Writers, some very patheticall Declamations perhaps might have been spar'd, as being rather beside the purpose, and not at all coming up to the point. However, to give them their due, some of them do offer at something like proper Proof, and such as we want: which shall be consider'd presently.

IN the mean time, before we hear their Evidence, it may be proper we should know, as precisely as we can, what it is they would prove: For they do not all adopt the same System; I mean in the same extensive Sense. I mention'd St. *Jerom*, in a Note before *, as making an exception in favour of *Christians*, at the same time that he professes to believe that the Torments of the Devil, and of such wicked Men as say in their Hearts *there is no God*, will be eternal. But as this seems to be the Effect only of a fond Partiality, natural enough to Men for those of their own Sect †, I am not aware that any one now will

* See N^o XXVI.

† Thus the *Jews* had a saying, *Omnis Israel particeps erit futuri seculi*: And for the Meaning of this *Seculum futurum*, see *Menasseh Ben-Israel* de Resurrect Mort. Lib.

will undertake formally to defend it. It would be strange if wicked Christians should come off better than any other wicked Men, or be less affected by the Sanctions of the Gospel. But then, if we may not limit this System of a Restoration to Men of our own Religion; must it not, however, be limited to Creatures of our own Species? Or must we take in the Devil, and his Angels? I conceive a genuine and consistent *Origenist* must take in all, if he would not ruin his own Scheme: All Beings, with him, must sooner or later, return to order; and there must be an universal Restoration, or none. For if he grants that one Race of free Creatures may render themselves incurably wicked and miserable, beyond all Help and Remedy; this may open a Gap for such a Train to follow, as will go near to blow up the Ground on which he stands. For if Angels may become eternally miserable, then, as to the Possibility of the thing, why not Men? And if it be consistent with the Perfec-

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tions

Lib. iii. C. I. So the Followers of *Mohammed* say—
 “Those who have lived in this holy Faith, and die in
 “the Belief thereof, shall undergo the Purgation, and,
 “when it shall be God’s Pleasure, shall be released by
 “the Intercession of his Prophet, or through his Benig-
 “nity and Clemency; nor shall it come to pass that any
 “of those shall remain to Eternity in Hell, who have be-
 “liev’d and profess’d, without scruple or doubt, that
 “there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is the
 “Messenger of Allah: And those who in this Life hold
 “not that Tenet, nor believe therein, shall remain in
 “Hell for ever, where, in company with the Devils, (ac-
 “curst may they be) they shall be tortured with many
 “sorts of Torments.” *Mottraye’s Travels*, 1 Vol. In the
 Appendix, p. 355.

tions of God to permit the former, why not the latter? Besides, the *whole Work* of God is not restor'd: The *old Leaven of Malice and Wickedness*, of natural and moral Evil, is still suppos'd to be *eternally* fermenting in a considerable Portion of the Creation; when it was, I conceive, the *Origenist's* Point to prove, that, *behold, all things are become new*: Or rather, are restored to their original Rectitude and Goodness. They must therefore, to be consistent, hold an universal Restoration of Men and Devils; and this is, in fact, what they do maintain*. Thus much for the *Extent* and *Universality* of this Restoration: But,

WE have still a Question, or two, to ask, with regard to the *Nature* of it: Must the Devils be restored to the *Angelick* Dignity of their *first Estate*, and repossess the *Habitation* which they *left*? And must Men be made Partakers of that *Kingdom of Heaven*, out of which they were excluded at the Day of Judgment? Or must both be content with such a Share of Happiness, somewhere or other, as will make their Condition more eligible than Non-existence? These are different things; and the Proof of one, does not necessarily prove the other. If the Justice, or Goodness, of God, requires the latter, *viz.* that their Existence be better than not being; do both, or either of them, require the

* See A Letter of Resolution concerning *Origen* and the chief of his Opinions, 4to p. 74, and 130—31. And the Letter-Writer, mention'd before, in his 288, &c. Page.

the former too? Surely he is not obliged to give them supreme Felicity, and to make them altogether the *same* that they would have been, if they had never offended. Yet the Authors just referred to, sometimes seem to talk in this Strain; and their Terms of *Restitution*, *Restoration*, *Re-establishment*, &c. in the Rigour of them, may imply it. However, to prevent unnecessary Dispute, we will content ourselves with saying, in general, that the Beings concern'd, so far from subsisting for ever in a State of Condemnation and Misery in Hell, will be restor'd to Happiness, (more or less,) and the Favour of God. I still want to be satisfied, whether this Passage from Misery to Happiness is to be *immediate*. Is their Purification, or Reformation, (call it what you will,) to be begun in Hell? Or if begun, is it likewise to be *completed* there; so that they may go directly into a State of Happiness? Or, after they have suffered so much Punishment as the Justice of God, or the Reason of things, or their *own Case* required, (for these Men look upon all Punishment as *Curative*,) are they to go into some other State of Probation, and take their Chance once more, (or more properly have another Option,) for Happiness or Misery? The Author of the Letter concerning *Origen* lays down his Master's Doctrine, as to this Point, as follows: "I come
" now, (says he, *p. 71*) to the *Father's fifth*
" Opinion, which is this, That after long Pe-
" riods of Time the *Damned* shall be delivered
" from their Torments, *and try their Fortunes*
" *again*

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“ *again* in such Regions of the World, as their
 “ Nature and present Disposition fits * them
 “ for.” This appears to imply, that they by
 no means *as yet* obtain their *Rest* and *Reward*;
 but are first to pass through some future Trials,
 and be again exposed to the Risk of another
 Damnation. For there can be no such thing in
 any State of Trial, as an infallible Security
 against

* So again, p. 80. “ But whether their *Release* be by
 “ any Change wrought in the Disposition of their Spirits,
 “ but without *Death*, or whether by an *Escape*, as it
 “ were, by *dying* to the Body so tortured, there is no
 “ doubt to be made but that both ways they may come
 “ into play again, and try their fortunes once more in
 “ such Regions of the World as Providence judges fit for
 “ them.” Here, we see, this ingenious Writer does not
 determine, whether their *Release* will be *by Death*, or
without it; *whether in the Body, or out of the Body*; but
 be it as it may, they *are to come into play again, and try*
their fortunes once more. In the next Page he asks, “ What
 “ should hinder but that these punish’d Souls, whom long
 “ vexing Pain drove from all Commerce with Matter,
 “ and cast them into a *senseless Sleep*, will after their long
 “ *Inactivity* awake again into Life and Action ? ” Ac-
 cording to which Representation, the Scheme seems to be
 this; *viz.* that their Punishment, or Pain, will be so vi-
 olent, that it will not only separate the Soul from the Bo-
 dy, *from all Commerce with Matter*, but also cast it into a
senseless Sleep, a State of Insensibility; that after a long
Inactivity in this State, it will *awake again*, and being vi-
 tally united to Matter come into *play again, and try its*
fortune once more in another State of Probation. I would
 here only ask, whether after this *senseless Sleep* and long
Inactivity, they are to remember any thing that passed
 before it? *We*, at present, have forgot every thing, both
 what we *were*, and what we *did*, in our præ-existent
 State; according to *Origen’s Hypothesis* of Præ-existence.
 If the Case be the same with them, what they suffer’d for
 their ill Conduct in their *former* Probation, will have no
 Influence on their Behaviour in their *future*.

against Miscarriage. There must be Free-agency, a Possibility of Sin, and some Temptations to it. And if these prevail again, the Consequence must be another Judgment, and another State of Punishment. And of these Revolutions and *Vicissitudes*, as well as of such *Reveries* and wild Conjectures concerning them, *there is no end*.

BUT it will be said, perhaps, that this was a Singularity of *Origen's*, which the modern Advocates of a Restoration do not think themselves obliged to defend. Then, I conceive, they must defend what I am going to mention, *viz.* that their Reformation is wrought in Hell itself, so that they *immediately* pass from the Torments of that Place, into a State of Happiness. This, however, is not easily conceivable. That does not seem a proper Place for such a Work. The Letter-writer has taken notice of this, and put the Objection himself. "It is hard to conceive how a State of Blasphemy and Despair, such as that of the Damned is represented; should be proper to purify and re-establish them in Virtue and Bliss *." And whether he has answered it, in the Dissertation that follows it, I leave others to judge. At present I must pass on: And to be as brief as I can in these *Preliminaries*, I say, that this Restoration must be effected in some or other of these ways. They must either be restored

* At the end of Letter V. N. B. By the *Letter-writer* I always mean, the Author of the Letters translated out of *French*; not the Author of the Letter of Resolution concerning *Origen*.

stored all together at the same time, by a sort of general Release, and *that too immediately*, or to a State of Happiness without any intervening Probation: Or, they must all together, and at the same time, be placed in another State of Probation; (where their final Happiness will still be in Suspense:) Or, *every Individual* must be put into a new State of Trial, or into a State of Happiness, singly and by himself, at his *own Time*, and as his own Case requires: Or *some* only must undergo a new Trial, while *others* go *immediately* into Happiness; and *this* again in Companies, or singly; according to what each one's Condition, Character, and Temper fits him for. Then, those that have Bodies, must either leave them behind them, by *dying* as it were again; or bring them with them into their new Place, or State, of Existence.

IN all these Points, tho' it be none of my Business to reconcile them, it were to be wish'd that our *Restorers* would come to some good Agreement. Each of these Ways, I conceive, has its Difficulties; and if any one was fix'd on, we might then argue the Case on that particular *Hypothesis*. As they are, however, they may serve to shew, that the Case is not so very clear, as some may think it. It is easy to talk of a Restoration; but when we come to consider more particularly the Ways, and Means, and Methods, by which it must be effected, in the complicated Case of wicked Men and Devils, it turns out a very intricate Affair; and will require

quire some Proof, much clearer than its own intrinsick Evidence, to support it. However, to Proof, direct and positive Proof, every thing must give way. And if such can be produced in the Case before us, we will readily admit it, notwithstanding any Difficulties in the thing itself.

THE Proofs then of this great Point, a Restoration in general, are fetch'd either from Reason, (or as the Letter-writer loves to express himself, *immutable Truths*,) or from Scripture. I shall begin with the *latter* ; that I may not be demolished at first, by attacking their *main Strength*, which they are sensible does not lie in the Word of God. Some of them hardly pretend to alledge Scripture-Evidence in the point ; but the Letter-writer has supplied that Defect, and placed his Proofs of this kind in very orderly Array. They follow in his own Words ;—

“ ONE of the chief of them, is drawn from
“ the Incarnation of *Jesus Christ*, and the De-
“ sign of his coming.

“ A SECOND, from the many positive De-
“ clarations wherewith the Scriptures abound,
“ *That God will not always chide, nor keep his*
“ *Anger for ever.*

“ A THIRD is taken from the numerous
“ Prophetical Promises, agreeing with these
“ first Proofs.” (*Letter II.*)

Now,

Now, as to the first of these Topicks, the *Incarnation of Jesus Christ*, it does not affect the Devil and his Angels; and therefore whatever force it may have with regard to Mankind, still one Race of God's Creatures are left unprovided for: *For verily He took not on him the Nature of Angels; but He took on him the Seed of Abraham*: Or rather, as it is in the Margin of our Bibles, *He taketh not hold of Angels*, (to relieve, or restore them,) *but of the Seed of Abraham He taketh hold*: Heb. ii. 16. But, passing by this, how is the Argument from the *Incarnation* managed with regard to Mankind? Why, says our Author in the first place, "Christ has thereby *ennobled all Human Nature*, and become the Brother of Mankind; which single Thought might be sufficient to make us presume that none of that Race, whose Nature God assum'd, shall perish eternally." To which I answer first, that whatever we might have *presum'd*, if we had had no Declarations to the contrary, it is great folly to presume so now, when we are assur'd in almost every Page of the Gospel, that notwithstanding the Incarnation of Christ, we may still bring ourselves into the Condemnation of the Devil. 2. The more Christ has *ennobled our Nature*, the more inexcusable are they who defile, and deprave it; and who, instead of being sensible of such an Honour, and such Obligations, throw them all behind them, and trample as it were the Divine Author of them under

under foot. 3. Admitting that Christ is, in some sense, *become the Brother of Mankind*, yet he himself hath taught us, in effect, that mere natural Relation will avail nothing: *Matt. xii. 48.* Something more is required to make us *Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ*. This may obviate what the Author suggests in a Note, about the Relation between Man and the Divinity, as Man is not only the *Work of God*, but also his *Race or Offspring*; which he says is *a very strong Proof on this occasion*. And indeed if it be any Proof at all, it comes home to the Point of an *universal Restoration*: For no doubt those *Sons of the Morning* who fell from Heaven, were the *Race, or Offspring*, of God, as well as Men. But I take the liberty to repeat that *bare Relations* signify nothing, but to aggravate the Guilt of those who are insensible of them. Because wicked Spirits, and wicked Men, were originally the *Race, or Offspring*, of God, must He therefore make them happy whether they will, or no? Must He *invert Order*? change the Nature of things? make Good, Evil; and Evil, Good? No; the Author will allow *this* is neither reasonable, nor possible. Nor is it reasonable or possible upon such terms, for Christ to save all the Individuals who partake of that Nature, which He condescended to assume. In a word, it does by no means follow, that because Christ was pleased to be made Man, therefore all Men will at last be saved. But if this be a Truth, one may expect to meet with some Footsteps of it, somewhere or other,
in

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in Scripture ; and it will appear, tho' not merely from the Nature, or Fact, of the Incarnation, yet from the open, avow'd, and declared Design of it. " Yes, yes, continues the Author, " the Scriptures every where declare, that Jesus Christ came *to save all Men* ; and this is repeated in almost every Page of the New Testament." But,

Does the Scripture every where, or any where, declare, that *all Men* will, in the Event, be *actually* saved? Nothing like it. On the contrary, the Scripture itself distinguishes in the Case ; by teaching us, that tho' Christ came to make the Offers of Salvation to all Men, yet He becomes, in the Event, *the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him* : Heb. v. 9. . The reason is, that Christ came with no *absolute* Design of saving all Men, whether they would, or not ; whether they would, or would not, believe in Him, and obey Him ; (such a Design is absurd and impossible in the nature of things, and can be entertain'd by no wise Being :) But He offers, as the Author says, *all Men the Grace necessary to Salvation* ; and if they will make use of it, and comply with his Terms, He will actually, in due time, confer upon them *the Gift of eternal Life*. This indeed is his "*positive Will, which sooner or later will have its effect.*" And his Design of saving *all Men*, was far from being only "*a bare Wish*" that they might be saved ; since it was a *real Offer* of Salvation, upon the same
Terms

Terms that it was tender'd to those, who actually partake of it. *Why will ye die, O House of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye**. Is this only a bare *Wish* that they would not die? Or does it not imply, that God had done every thing on his part, and that became his Character to do? Which yet in the Event might prove ineffectual, and *Iniquity* still be their *Ruin*. But enough of this: "Let us come to something more particular."

"JESUS CHRIST came to restore all things; of which mention is made, *Acts* iii. But if He saves only a small Number, all things are so far from being restor'd, that there would be but a Handful so favour'd, whilst the Multitude would continue eternally in Disorder and Desolation." Here, omitting his old Fallacy of a *small Number*, and a *Handful*, &c. nothing can be more *impertinently* applied to a Restoration of the Damned, after the Day of Judgment, than this Scripture; which speaks plainly of a *Restitution* (whatever that may mean) at the Day of Judgment, or Christ's second Coming. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted*, says the Apostle, *†. 19. that your Sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord; †. 20. And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: †. 21. Whom the Heaven must receive, until the times*

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* *Ezek.* xviii. 31.

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of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the World began. Unless therefore the Wicked are to be restor'd at the same time that they are to be condemn'd, and at the same time that the Righteous are to be refresh'd, the Restitution here mentioned must be a quite different thing from the Restoration of the Wicked in Hell; which, I dare say, God hath not spoken of by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the World began.

THE Author next dips into 1 Cor. xv. *As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; &c. 22.* Where he spends the Fire of his Criticism to shew that *All* means *all Men*, universally. But alas, the Point he should have settled is the Meaning of, — *shall be made alive.* For since by Man came Death, says the Apostle, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead: for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The Words are a plain Proof of an *universal* Resurrection; and that is all. The Restoration is still left in the lurch. All shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; and shall come forth, they that have done Good, to the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation. John v. 28, 29. He thinks the Apostle “ speaks of another future Period, which he “ calls the End, &c. 24. And then the End shall “ come, when he shall have delivered up the “ Kingdom

"Kingdom to God, even to the Father." Whereas *the End* is not another future Period, but the very Period of the Resurrection and General Judgment. By the Decisions then made, an * End will be put to Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom; as he will have brought many Sons unto Glory, (all that were fit for it,) and have put all Enemies under his feet. He may then deliver up the Kingdom which he administer'd as Messias, or Mediator, because the Purposes of it are accomplished. All the Faithful are glorified, and all Enemies are subdued. *Then is the End.* For He was but to reign till He had put all Enemies under his feet: *ψ. 25.* But this *Subjection*, the Author urges, must be *voluntary*: Else, it could never be spoken of as a thing to come; "because from the Foundation of the World all things are subject to him;" and if it be *voluntary*, there is no

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"more

* Since the writing of this, I have read Dr. Berriman's Discourse concerning *the Perpetual Duration of the Kingdom of Christ*. (In his *Boyle's Lectures*, Serm. xii.) where, tho' he rejects the Notion of the *Abrogation of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom*, yet he allows as much as I meant either here, or elsewhere, by saying that *an End will be put to this Kingdom*, or that Christ will *deliver it up*. I never intended by this, that this Kingdom will be *really abolished*; but only that the present manner of Administration, the Acts and Exercise of Government, will be alter'd, and some of them cease; which is expressly asserted by this excellent Writer, and is plain from the Nature of the thing. Where the Kingdoms are so different as the Kingdom of Grace and the Kingdom of Glory, the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, the Exercise of Government must necessarily vary. But still Christ, the King of Glory, presides in this Kingdom; and will do so for evermore,

“ more Hell.” As if the Subjection of all Enemies after the Day of Judgment, tho’ far from being voluntary, will not be very different from what it is at present. Wicked Men and Devils are always, in some sense, subject to God’s over-ruling Providence. It would be bad if they were not. But they would find, (and that they know,) another sort of Subjection at the Day of Judgment; when God *will take to him his great Power, and will reign*, by rendering to every one according to his Works. His Arguments to prove that by *Death, the last Enemy that shall be destroyed*, is not meant “ temporal Death,” are surprizing. His *first* is, because “ after the coming of Christ, there “ is no room for that Death.” Therefore, one would think, it is sufficiently destroyed; as there is *no room* for it to make new Conquests, and its old Subjects are rescued from it by the Resurrection. But this Death “ is only termed “ *Sleep*.” And what then? If the Death of the Righteous, or Death in general, be termed *Sleep*, does that prove that St. Paul does not say that this Death will be destroyed at the Resurrection? It is called *Death*, much more frequently than it is call’d *Sleep*, in the Scripture, as is evident to every one who reads it without the Author’s *Glasses* *. No, continues he,

* This alludes to the Author’s curious Remarks upon the Use of *Glasses*, in his *seventeenth Dialogue*. The Inhabitants of the gloomy Kingdom (of the *Catacombs*) have “ an almost infinite Variety of *Glasses* of all sorts.” — “ They have *Glasses* well colour’d, which communicate “ the

he, what the Apostle "calls *Death*, the great " *Death*, 2 Cor. i. 10. is a Separation from " God." Never was any Point prov'd clearer ! The *Trouble which came to St. Paul in Asia*, which *press'd him out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despair'd even of Life*, his Deliverance out of which, it is plain he calls *ŷ. 10. Deliverance from ſo great a Death*, is brought to prove that Death in Scripture means a *mystical Death*, " a Separation from God." His last Argument is, that *St. Paul ranks the Death here spoken of " with the Enemies of " God ;" but temporal Death " is an Agent of " his Power employ'd in executing his Orders."* As if the Enemies of God may not be made, by his overruling Wisdom, the Agents, or Instruments, of his Providence and Power. Certainly God made not Death ; *by Man came Death*, says the Apostle ; or, if we go one Step higher, *through Envy of the Devil came Death into the World.* And as the Devil and Sin, the great Enemies of God, introduced it, it may truly be rank'd with them. After some strange confused Stuff, which he is led into by supposing falsely that *St. Paul speaks of another future Period*, he fixes upon the words, *ŷ. 28. 'That God may be all in all.* They seem, he says, " irrefragably to prove " the Abolition of Sin and Hell, and the Restoration of all the Creatures. They would have " no Sense, if Hell-torments were eternal. God

Q 3

" can

" the same Colours to the Object." Hence one sees *Black*, where another sees *White*. Some perceive *Mountains*, where others find only some *Grains of Sand*.

“ can never be *all and in all*, but by restoring “ the Order of things.” What Mysteries may be discover’d, by the help of proper *Glasses*, in a little Expression ; like Millions of *Animalcula* in a little Water ! When Christ, (who likewise, St. Paul says Col. iii. 11. *is all, and in all*,) has destroyed Death, and Him that hath the power of Death, that is the Devil, with all his Party and Adherents ; when he has put down *all Rule, Authority and Power*, contrary to his own, and deliver’d up even his own delegated Kingdom to God, surely God will be *all in all* : At least, this appears to be the sense in which St. Paul uses the Expression here ; though a certain other Person can see *no Sense* in it, unless Hell-torments likewise be ended. But the *mere Force* of the Expression implies no such thing, nor is any such Sense required by the Context, or Course of the Apostle’s reasoning. It is ridiculous to think that if the Devil and his Adherents are not *restor’d*, there will still be a Kingdom opposite to God’s ; for Hell is not at all their Kingdom, but their Place of Punishment. “ The “ *only Kingdom* of the Devil, is the Dominion “ of Sin in the *present World*.” This Restoration of all the Creatures, proceeds the Author, “ is further confirm’d by the Exclamation of “ St. Paul, O Death, where is thy Sting ? * O “ Grave,

* See Clarke’s Exp. of the Cat. p. 88.

“ We find it in other Translations,” says he in his Note, O Hell, where is thy Victory ? “ Common Sense “ should lead us to espouse this Version.” But then, I fear, it would mislead us, if he means by Hell the Place of the

“ Grave, where is thy Victory? If Death and
 “ the Grave have no other Sting but Sin, and
 “ this Sting must be destroy’d; does it not
 “ hence follow, that Hell must be destroy’d
 “ also? Since ’tis certain, that if Sin were killed
 “ in Men, there would be no more Hell.”

This Writer has a pleasant way of proving what is not deny’d, and leaving the Point in dispute to shift for itself. *If Sin must be destroy’d*, quoth he, Then, so and so. Could not he see that it was his business to *prove*, and not to *suppose*, that Sin will be so destroy’d, Root and Branch, in all Creatures whatsoever, as to leave no room for any farther Punishment? Then indeed *there would be no more Hell*. But St. Paul’s Exclamation proves no such thing; the Argument he is upon having nothing to do with the Destruction of Sin in *Gehenna*, or Hell, but only with the *Victory* good Christians obtain, through Christ, over Death, and Sin, and *Hades*, in the Resurrection. What he suggests in a *Note*, as if the *Victory* here spoken of was not “ in relation to the Resurrection,” is a flat Contradiction to St. Paul’s own Words, *v. 54.* *When this corruptible shall have put on Incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on Immortality, then shall be brought to pass the*

Q 4

Saying

the Punishment of the Damned, as that word commonly does mean. And yet, on the other hand, it is not “ the Piece of Ground, where the dead Body is laid,” that is here intended: But it is *Hades*, the Place, or State, in which the Soul abides, while the dead Body is in the Ground. Over this State of Separation, and *Death* which made it, St. Paul triumphs, in view of the Resurrection:

Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory. Whether this Resurrection “be an Advantage to the Damned,” or not, it is an inestimable one to the Blessed ; which is the Case the Apostle had in his Thoughts, and is a very proper Subject of Triumph and Exultation.

I SINCERELY think it would be time mispent to follow this Critic in the rest of his Allegations from Scripture, so particularly as I have done hitherto. It will be enough barely to cite, or refer to them, and leave them without any Comment to the Judgment of the Public. Col. i. 20. “Observe here, says he, an *universal Reconciliation* of all the Creatures to God.” Now, not to remind him that there is a great Difference between the Offer of the Terms of Reconciliation on God’s part, and the accepting of them on Man’s, the *very Words* of the Text are against him ; unless by *things in Earth, or things in Heaven* *, be understood also things in Hell. “Jesus Christ is called the *first-born from the dead, and the first-born of every Creature* ; *ψ. 15, 18.* And *ψ. 16.* it is said, “*That all things that were created by him, were also created for him.*” All which is very true, whether the Doctrine of the Restoration be so, or not.

“IN the first of *Ephesians*, the same Truth is declared. Ver. 9, 10. mention is made of
the

* For the Meaning of which Expression, see Dr. Chapman’s *Euseb.* Vol. II. p. 317, &c.

“ *the Mystery of the Will of God, which he*
 “ *had hitherto kept to himself ; and what is this*
 “ *Mystery? To gather together in one all things*
 “ *in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and*
 “ *which are on Earth, even in Him ; and when*
 “ *will he do this ? In the Dispensation of the*
 “ *Fulness of Times, that is to say, when all things*
 “ *shall be subjected to him, and he shall be ex-*
 “ *alted above all Principalities and Powers,*
 “ *and Dignities and Dominions, and above every*
 “ *Name that is named, both in this Life and*
 “ *that which is to come.*” Thus this excellent
 Commentator ! who might as well have under-
 taken to prove from these Words, that the Re-
 storation is *past already*. For if *that* is to hap-
 pen when Christ is *thus exalted*, it must ac-
 cording to St. Paul have been accomplish’d long
 ago ; God having long ago *raised him from the*
dead, and set him at his own right Hand in
heavenly places, far above all the Powers and Dig-
nities mentioned before, and hath put all things
under his feet : ϕ. 20, 21. “ The same A-
 “ postle, in the 11th of the *Romans*, declares
 “ as great a Mystery, that those who before had
 “ rebelled against God, and been cut off be-
 “ cause of their Unbelief, should be again grafted
 “ in, and at last obtain Mercy.”

THAT is, because St. Paul speaks of the Resto-
 ration, or Conversion, of the *Jews*, who were then
 cut off because of Unbelief, but might, if they
 did *not bide still in Unbelief*, ϕ. 23. be grafted
 in again ; therefore there will be an universal
 Resto-

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Restoration of wicked Men, and Devils, after the Day of Judgment. Next, slightly mentioning *Heb. ii. 9.* that *Christ tasted Death for all Men*; and elsewhere, *that he is made the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*; and the 2d of *Phil.* *That every Knee shall bow at the Name of Jesus*; he adds, “ I shall only dwell a little on the last Verses of the 5th of *Romans*, that are very clear in this case; where the Apostle compares Jesus Christ to *Adam*, as also the Fruits we reap from each. *As by one Man Sin entered into the World,*” &c. Upon which he argues thus, “ *All were made Sinners by Adam*, therefore *all ought to be made righteous by Jesus Christ.*” And supposing *all*, (the whole Race of Mankind,) to be made righteous by Jesus Christ, *so far forth* as they were made Sinners by *Adam*, what then? The consequence is, that no Man shall be condemn’d for *Adam’s Sin*; but if their own personal and actual Sins bring them into a State of Condemnation again, they must blame, not *Adam*, but *themselves*. A better and more gracious Covenant, (which is therefore deservedly call’d the *Covenant of Grace*,) is establish’d with Mankind in Christ Jesus, than the old one forfeited by *Adam’s Sin*. And in this sense, *where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound*: Words, which cannot relate to a *future Event*, depending upon Man’s free Will, (as their actual Compliance with this *Grace* does,) but which declare what the things are *in themselves*, or in the Design and Purpose of God. St. Paul’s exalting the

the *Gift* above the *Offence*, cannot mean with regard to the *Universality* of it, or the Numbers of Men concern'd; as the Author seems to think, tho' at the same time he appears sensible of the Absurdity, which he is willing to disguise. Says he in a *Note*, "If the Effects of the *Offence* were universal, what may we not expect from the *Gift*, if it ought to exceed it?" Why truly, that its Effects should be *more than universal*. But he would not speak out, lest the Absurdity should be too plain. But St. Paul best explains his own Meaning; *for the Judgment was by one to Condemnation*; (came by one Offence of one Man;) *but the free Gift is of many Offences unto Justification*; is an universal Declaration of Pardon, upon certain Conditions, of *all* Offences whatsoever, to *all* Mankind. Moreover, we will grant to the Author, that the *free Gift* has "more influence to make us happy, than the *Offence* to make us miserable." Still it does not follow, that all will be happy; because *no Influence* can make them so, whether they will, or not.

HIS "second Argument for the Opinion in question, is taken from the express Declarations of Scripture, That God keeps not his Resentment for ever." He begins to "enquire into the Strength of this Proof" in his *third Letter*, which is concerning the Conclusion of the second Commandment.

“ IN the first Part, God shews himself as a
 “ powerful and jealous God, punishing Iniquity to
 “ the fourth Generation ; in the last, he is repre-
 “ sented as *exerting Mercy to Thousands of Ge-*
 “ *nerations.* Doth not this mean, that Justice in
 “ his Punishments is restrain’d within certain
 “ Bounds, whereas Mercy knows no Limits?”

IF the Author will argue from the mere *Words* and *Letter* of this Commandment, Mercy is as really restrain’d within certain Bounds, as Justice ; only the Bounds of the former are vastly wider, and more extensive, than those of the latter *. All God’s Perfections are *in themselves* equally infinite, and yet the Exercise of them must be limited by the Nature of the Objects, with regard to which they are exerted. He contends himself, (*Letter I.*) that in God, both *Goodness* and *Justice* are *boundless* ; that they are so far from *destroying* one another, that they are *inseparable* : “ *Justice* is not opposite to *Good-*
 “ *ness*, nor *Goodness* to *Justice.*” Was it the design then of this Commandment to *restrain within certain Bounds*, That which is *boundless*?

Or

* Hence Mr. *Whiston* makes his Calculation, “ That
 “ in general, the Duration of the Punishment of the Wic-
 “ ked will be no greater, as compared with the Dura-
 “ tion of the Happiness of the Good, than two or three
 “ are to a thousand.” (p. 135.) I know not what these
 Gentlemen see, more than other People can, in the Con-
 clusion of this Commandment ; but I am satisfied if *we*
 were to argue so on the other side, from our own fanci-
 ful Interpretations of very plain Words, *our Arguments*
 would be treated with great Contempt,

Or to represent two divine Attributes, as inconsistent with one another, which *are so inseparable, that we cannot so much as imagine, or suppose* them to subsist asunder? But the proper Answer to what he argues from the Conclusion of this Commandment is, that it is nothing to the purpose. A general Inference may be drawn from it, *viz.* That God delights much more in blessing, than in punishing; which is very consistent with our Doctrine. But it is only the Sanction of a *peculiar Law*, given to a People in *peculiar Circumstances* of Relation to the great Lawgiver, who was not only their God, but their King. Idolatry therefore, which was a Departure from Him, was as the Sin of Rebellion, or High Treason, against their Prince: And his Punishment of it might justly, and would naturally in the course of things, extend to the third or fourth Generation. But what is all this to the Punishments of another World, where there are no Generations, and where every Man bears only his own Iniquity? The Author says he “ does not suppose any one pretends to take
“ the Words literally *, or imagines that God
“ makes Children accountable for the Iniquities
“ of their Fathers.” As if these were equivalent.
This

* Yet in other places his Tune seems to be alter'd.
“ On how many occasions have we seen Children die for
“ the Iniquity of their Fathers, and Subjects for that of
“ Princes?” And then he recites several Instances; p. 340.
And again, p. 431, in a *Note*;— “ Children are punished
“ with their Fathers, Subjects with their Prince;—
“ God calls one Generation to an account for what passed
“ in the foregoing Age.”

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This Proposition, "God makes Children accountable for the Iniquities of their Fathers," may mean that He *always* does so; that this is the Rule of his Dealings with *all* Mankind, in *all* Ages of *this* World, and even in the *World to come*: Which certainly is not true. And yet the *Words* in question are to be taken *literally*, with proper Restrictions and Limitations; and when so qualified, imply no more than what the supreme Powers of this World do every day, in Cases of a like nature. But the Artifice is, to pretend that the Words cannot be taken in a *literal* sense; and then you may affix to them *any* (*mystical*) Sense, just to serve a turn. But whoever argues from that, argues only from a Sense of his own, and not at all from *the Sense of the Conclusion of the second Commandment*.

WE are next encounter'd, in his *fourth* Letter, with *the whole 107th Psalm*. And 'tis well, when his hand was in, that he did not attack us with the whole hundred and fifty. For all of them, more or less, "set before our Eyes a Representation of the wonderful ways of the Divine Wisdom, Justice, and Mercy." The *107th Psalm* in particular, is a Celebration of God's manifold Providence, over Travellers, over Captives, over sick Men, over Sea-men, and in divers Varieties of Life; as the *Argument* of it runs very justly in our common Bibles. If the Author has a mind to make an *Allegory* of it, he has his liberty; provided only he does not put his *Allegories* upon us for Scripture-Proofs:
For

For in that way Scripture may be made to prove any thing. "That immense Goodness is not confined to the short Space of this Life," we believe as firmly as he does. *The Mercy of the Lord will endure for ever*; as Millions of Creatures will experience. But that all will become proper Objects of it, or, as he expresses it, "shall be capable of receiving its Influence;" is more than he can prove from this *Psalms*, or any other.

WE must follow him now to *Psalms* ciii. v. 9. For he goes backwards, retreating as it were to his strongest Hold. "One of the strongest Expressions against the Eternity of Torments, is this, *He will not always chide, nor keep his Anger for ever*: A Declaration more strong, and the further removed from Ambiguity, as it is taken from the Nature and Perfections of God himself, and perfectly agrees with the Ideas of Justice, which every one finds engraved upon his own Mind." Several things may be return'd to this; as first, he has here forgot the Point he was to prove. For supposing this to be *one of the strongest Expressions against the Eternity of Torments*, it does not therefore follow that it proves his System of the Restoration. Then, whereas he says "this Declaration is taken from the Nature and Perfections of God," &c. I would ask whether this Proposition, *viz.* God will punish for ever, those who for ever are proper Objects of Punishment, be not likewise taken from the Nature and

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and Perfections of God himself? If the Nature and Perfections of God permit him to be angry, or to punish, for a time; why may they not permit him to punish for ever, if the Reasons of Punishment still continue? If the Punishment was at first without Reason, it was unjust, how temporary or short soever; and if there be reason for it, it will not be unjust, let the Duration of it be what it will. But the proper Answer undoubtedly is, that the *Psalmist* is not at all speaking of Punishment in another World, in a State of Retribution; but of Correction, or Chastisement, in the present State of Discipline and Trial*. The Author has almost stumbled upon this himself, in a *Note*; which overthrows all that he advances as from this Text. “A Father,
“ says

* Ver. 9. *He will not always chide: neither will he keep his Anger for ever.* 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our Sins: nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities.* 11. *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth: so great is his Mercy toward them that fear him.* 12. *As far as the East is from the West: so far hath he removed our Transgressions from us.* It is the same Case with *Isaiah*, Chap. lvii. ver. 16. which the Author thinks “deserves to be quoted at full length;” p. 287. *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the Spirit should fail before me, and the Souls which I have made.* The Prophet having reproved the idolatrous Jews in the former Part of the Chapter; ver. 15. comforts the humble and contrite. Then follow the Words in question; and ver. 17, he goes on,—*For the Iniquity of his Covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his Heart.* Ver. 18. *I have seen his ways, and will heal him, &c.* Nevertheless he assures us, ver. 20, 21. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt. There is no Peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*

“ says he, doth not chide his Children, whom
“ he is resolved to abandon ; by chiding he shows
“ his Design of correcting and reducing them to
“ their Duty.” In this sense then of *chiding*,
when it is declared that *God will not always chide*,
what is it but a Declaration that *He is resolved*
to abandon such Children, whom no Chiding,
no Correction, will *reduce to their Duty*? In a
word, Correction and Punishment are very dif-
ferent things ; one proper to a State of moral
Discipline, the other, to a State of Retribution ;
one must end, either by the Amendment of the
Party corrected, or by his incurable Wickedness,
(for why then should he be corrected any more?)
The other may, or may not, for any thing here
said by the *Psalmist* : But certainly we ought to
take our Notions of this Matter from such Pas-
sages of Scripture as do relate to it, and not from
those which do not. The rest of this *Letter* is
nothing but Misrepresentation.

HE proceeds, in *Letter V.* to produce *the*
prophetical Promises agreeing with the preceding
Proofs. But I may fairly be excused from giv-
ing them any particular Answer, as he himself
appears to lay no stress upon them. He pre-
tends to “ employ the Authority of the Prophets
“ only as collateral Testimonies that are suffi-
“ cient only, as they agree with the former Evi-
“ dences:” That is, both with the *unchange-*
“ *able Truths* he has laid down as his Founda-
“ tion, and with the express and positive Decla-
“ rations of the New Testament, that are not
R “ *figurative.*”

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“*figurative.*” Without this Rule, “the Phra-
 “*seology* of the Prophets is so ambiguous and
 “obscure, that we may run into a thousand
 “Extravagancies, which we may suppose well-
 “grounded, under pretence of some Expressions,
 “whose meaning we do not comprehend.”
 The plain *English* of all which is, that he is
 sensible these *Prophetical Promises* are nothing
 to the purpose: But if he has proved his Point
 before, they may be *applied* to it; and under-
 stood in this sense, as well as any other. This,
in general, of his *Prophetical Proofs*: In *parti-*
cular, he says of *Isaiab* xl. 4, 5, * (which is the
 first Testimony he quotes,) that he “knows we
 “may restrain the Meaning of those Words to
 “something less general; and should any one
 “dispute it with him, he would easily give it
 “up.” — “Here is another of the same sort,”
 (that is, as little to the purpose,) *Isaiab* xlv. 23,
 24, 25. † If what is here promised, or predicted,
 be confirm’d by an *Oath*, we may safely believe
 it will come to pass. But that this is the Resto-
 ration of wicked Men and Devils in Hell, is the
 Point to be proved. “The Apostle St. Paul
 “quotes

* *Every Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough Places plain. And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all Flesh shall see it together: for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

This Passage, as applied in the New Testament, relates to *John the Baptist*, and makes part of his Preaching: and what a Preacher he was of this Author’s System of the *Re-establishment*, may be seen Chap. i. N^o I. II.

† *I have sworn by myself, — that unto me every Knee shall bow, every Tongue shall swear.* — Referr’d by St. Paul, *Rom. xiv. 11.* to the Day of Judgment.

“ quotes this Text in these words; *Rom. xiv. 11.*
 “ *Every Tongue shall give praise to God; which*
 “ *sure cannot be applied to the Damned.*” This
 is amazing! *St. Paul* is there dissuading *Christians* from *judging* and *despising* their *Brethren*; and his great Argument against it is, (like that of *St. James*, N^o LXXXI, upon the same occasion,) that we must *all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ*. For it is written, says the Apostle, *as I live, saith the Lord, every Knee shall bow to me, and every Tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* Is not this now an admirable proof, that *St. Paul* understood the Text in *Isaiah*, to relate to the Doctrine of the Restoration? He next quotes *Isaiah ix. 2.** Only because mention is there made of *Darkness, and the Shadow of Death*. And lastly, *Cb. xxiv. 22. †* because, otherwise these are obscure words.

R 2

IF

* *The People that walked in Darkness, have seen a great Light: they that dwell in the Land of the Shadow of Death, upon them hath the Light shined.* For the Meaning and Application of which, see *Matt. iv. 14, 15, 16.*

† *And they shall be gathered together as Prisoners are gathered in the Pit, and shall be shut up in the Prison, and after many Days shall they be visited.*

“ The word *visiting* is used for punishing, as well as
 “ for remembring with Grace and Favour. Thus this
 “ very Phrase, *After many Days thou shalt be visited*, is
 “ used, *Ezek. xxxviii. 8.* See likewise *Prov. xix. 23*”

Mr. *Lowth*, on the Place; “ who explains it of the
 “ Kings of the Earth, who made war with Christ and
 “ his Saints at *Armageddon*, *Rev. xvi. 16. xix. 19.* and
 “ there discomfited, lay languishing under the Sentence
 “ of Condemnation till after the Battle of *Gog and Magog*,
 “ Chap. xx. 8, 9, 10. when they were, with Satan their
 “ Leader, punish’d with everlasting Destruction.”

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IF this be all the Light and Evidence which he is able to collect from *Isaiab*, what can be expected from *Jeremiah*, who “ does not speak so “ clearly as *Isaiab*, and makes use of figurative Expressions ?” However, he will offer some *Conjectures and Probabilities* from him; viz. from *Chap. xxv.* and *Chap. xlv. et seq.* Who can stand before a Man, who thus argues from *whole Chapters*? The *Design* of which too he is pleas’d to *wave*, and considers only the *Figure*. But that he gives “ the true Sense of this *Figure*, we cannot well doubt, (he says) if we credit *St. Peter’s* Explication of it.” Now, would not any man suspect by this, that *St. Peter* argues from the *figurative*, or *spiritual*, Sense of these Prophecies, as this Writer does? But where shall we find any such thing? *St. Peter* only says in the *Text* alledged, viz. *1 Epist. Chap. iv. v. 17.* *The time is come that Judgment must begin at the House of God; and if it begin first at us, what shall the End of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?* Now, if *St. Peter* had answer’d his own Question, and told us their *End* shall be a *Restoration*, it would have been directly *in point*; but at present, he seems to be introduced to as little purpose as *St. Paul* was just before.

“ We come next to *Ezekiel*, in the 16th
 “ Chapter of whose Prophecy there is an Alle-
 “ gory that may have some Relation to the Ar-
 “ gument we are upon, though it mentions it
 “ it only figuratively.” But as this is only an
Allegory,

of Future Punishment.

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Allegory, to which the Author affixes a Sense which he does *not insist upon* himself, *but proposes barely as a Conjecture*, we are at liberty, I presume, to pass on. Not that we shall meet with any thing more convincing; for “the last Verses of the Prophet *Micah*,” which he thinks are “less allegorical than those already cited,” relate no more to *our Subject* than the rest do; as will appear to any one who reads the *Chapter*. We may see by the * Quotation below,

* Porro qui volunt Supplicia aliquando finire; et licet post multa tempora, tamen terminum habere tormenta, his utuntur Testimoniis. ^a Quum intraverit Plenitudo Gentium, tunc omnis Israel salvus fiet. Et iterum: ^b Conclufit Deus omnia sub peccato, ut omnibus miseriatur. Et in alio loco Sanctus loquitur: ^c Iram Domini sustinebo, quia peccavi ei, donec iustificet Causam meam, et auferat iudicium meum, et educat me in Lucem. Et rursus: ^d Benedicam te Domine, quoniam iratus es mihi. Avertisti faciem tuam à me, et misertus es mei. Dominus quoque loquitur ad Peccatorem: Quum Ira furoris mei fuerit, rursus sanabo. Et hoc est quod in alio loco dicitur: ^e Quam grandis multitudo Bonitatis tuæ Domine, quam abscondisti timentibus te. Quæ omnia replicant, asseverare cupientes, post Cruciatu atque Tormenta, futura Refrigeria; quæ nunc abscondenda sunt ab his quibus timor utilis est, ut dum Supplicia reformidant, peccare desistant. Quod nos Dei solius debemus Scientiæ derelinquere, cujus non solum misericordiæ, sed et Tormenta in pondere sunt, et novit quem, quomodo, aut quamdiu debeat iudicare. *Hieron. in Isai. ult.*

^a Rom. xi. 25, 26.

^b Ver. 32. Gal. iii. 22.

^c Mich. vii. 9.

^d Isai. xii. 1.

^e Psal. xxxi. 19.

Here follows *Jerom's* own Explication of the Literal Sense of *Micah*, vii. 9. Videtur mihi juxta Litteram, Jerusalem contra Babylonicam et cæteras Gentes loqui, quæ sibi insultaverant: *Ne lætamini in Ruina mea*: Quia Domino miserante confurgam; postquam sedero in Captivitate, educet me ille de Tenebris, et erit Lux mea.

low, that he is not the first Man who argued in this manner. But whatever weight such Arguments might have in *their Day*, or whatever Apology may be offer'd for those who used them, it is surprizing to see them revived in our Age, when Critical Learning is so much improv'd, and the Literal Sense of Scripture so well understood. No one now will believe that wicked Men and Devils will be restor'd to Happiness and the Favour of God, because there are some Promises of a Restoration made to the *Jews*, or because it is said — *yet will I bring again the Captivity of Moab in the latter days*; tho' the same be said too “ of *Egypt*, and the Children of *Ammon*.” The Author appears perfectly sensible of all this himself; and therefore, after citing a few more Passages from the *Psalms*, which need not be mention'd, being as pertinent as the rest, he concludes thus, addressing himself to his Correspondent; — “ I don't believe, Sir, you'll require any more Proofs upon this Subject; you “ may take these in what Sense you please; I “ only beg you'll consider there is nothing in the “ Sense I have put upon them, but what agrees “ perfectly well with *unchangeable Truths*, that “ is, with the Ideas we have of the Nature and “ Perfections of God; nor any thing but what is

Iram Domini sustinebo: quia me scio meruisse quod passa sum, donec ulciscar de Gentibus; et fiat iudicium meum. Novi quippe quod me sit educturus in Lucem, et videbo iustitiam ejus, et aspiciet inimica mea Babylon, et cæteræ Gentes in Circuitu, et operietur Confusione, quæ nunc dicit insultans, *ubi est Dominus Deus tuus?* Oculi mei videbunt eam, et non longo post tempore, sed nunc et in præsentiarum conculcatam, quasi lutum Platearum. Hactenus Jerusalem, sive Propheta ex persona Populi sit loquutus:—

“ is agreeable to the Truths clearly revealed to
“ us concerning the Design of the Redemption.”

WHAT he had to offer concerning the Design of the Redemption, has been taken notice of already. We may now consider his *unchangeable Truths*, in which he lays the Foundation of his System, and which are, he tells us, “ the Basis of all Religion.” And indeed the *Basis* of all Religion they are! For they are such Truths as these,--
“ God is *wise, just and good*; no one of his
“ Attributes destroys another:” &c. And if what he builds upon this Foundation be of the same solid and immutable nature with the Foundation itself, no doubt but it will stand; and all Attempts to overthrow it, will end in the Confusion of those who make them. If therefore I apprehend this to be the Case, I should here drop my Pen, and have no farther Contest with a Man who is thus supported, in every Step he takes, by immutable Truths. On the other hand, if I have done any thing in the former Chapters of this Work; if I have prov’d in the *First* and *Second* that Eternal Punishments are plainly threaten’d in Scripture*,
and

* It has been urged to this Writer, *That if the Justice of God did not allow him to punish the wicked with eternal Torments, his Wisdom would not have allow’d him to threaten them with them.* To which he answers, (p. 378,) “ This Argument would admit of no Reply, did it not suppose the
“ very thing in Dispute.” The Question, he says, is,
“ whether the Terms *Eternity*, and *for ever*, ought always
“ to signify a Duration without *End*?” Which, with Submission, is not the Question at all. What words signify *always*, or are used *always*, in the *whole Extent* of their meaning? not *αἰώνιος*, nor *αἰδιος*, nor *ἀθάνατος*, in Greek; (See *Blackwall’s Sacred Classics*, Vol. I. p. 178. in 8vo.) nor the words that answer to them in other Languages. The

and in the *Third* that it is consistent with the Perfections of God to execute his Threatnings; then I think all our Author's Arguments, tho' he may imagine they are fairly deduced from *unchangeable Truths*, are in effect obviated, and answer'd already. And indeed notwithstanding all his big words, his Courage seems to fail him towards the Conclusion of his Letter, where he confesses that "what he has hitherto said," (*viz.* in this *First Letter*, which *draws its Arguments from the nature of God, and the unchangeable Ideas we have of his Perfections*,) "ought to be considered only as imperfect Proofs, or as a sort of Probabilities," &c. What then has he left, to rest, or rely on? His Scripture-proofs are taken from him, and many of them given up by himself*; and the Arguments which he draws from immutable Truths, are to be consider'd *only as imperfect*

Question therefore is, whether the words signify Duration without *End*, not *always*, but in the *particular Subject* before us? And this I affirm, upon the Strength of what I have offer'd in the Chapters mention'd, without any danger of *begging the Question*. This Gentleman indeed is pleas'd to tell us, that the *Expressions on both sides are equivalent*; nay, that those on his Side are both *more numerous, and more positive*; (See p. 355, and 365.) But we have seen what sort of *Expressions* he was able to produce; the *Number* of which indeed may look considerable, but their *Weight* amounts to just nothing at all.

* See page 402, of his Book; where he gives up several of his Proofs from the New Testament, *viz.* Acts, iii. Coloss. i. Ephes. i. and more of the same kind. He will give them all up, he says, without fearing the Edifice will be shaken. For that truly is founded on Things, not on Expressions, the Sense of which may be disputed. Why then did he pretend to prove it by *Expressions*, or interest Scripture in the Question at all?

imperfect Proofs, or as a sort of Probabilities. What is this but a Confession, in effect, that he cannot prove his Point, either from Scripture or Reason? To be more particular;

THESE invincible Proofs of his, which he so much boasts of, are deliver'd by him in such a loose and rambling manner, that it is harder to collect them, and place them together in a proper view, than to answer them. But the Substance of them, as far as I can judge, is as follows:

“ That the Deity has but one Design in creating
 “ Beings, which is to render them happy^a:
 “ That being supremely wise, He must have
 “ foreseen what would befall his Creatures; and
 “ upon supposition that he was not able to make
 “ them happy, He should have drop'd his De-
 “ sign, and not exercised his Creating Power^b:
 “ That as it was his Design in Creating them,
 “ to render them happy, so his Purposes cannot
 “ be frustrated by the Resistance of Man, but
 “ he will find out some method for bringing
 “ them to Repentance and Holiness, without
 “ forcing their Liberty^c: That the contrary sup-
 “ poses in God a *Helpless Wisdom*, reduced to
 “ the necessity of abandoning his most perfect
 “ work, and letting it perish eternally, for want
 “ of means to restore it; or, in other words, it
 “ supposes the infinitely wise and perfect Being
 “ to propose a Design, in which He miscarries;
 “ and which He is not able to accomplish through
 “ the

^a See p. 250—52. *Conf.* p. 388.

^b See p. 253. *Confer* p. 257. *Not.* and p. 388.

^c See p. 335. *Conf.* p. 338.

“the immense Space of Eternity^d.” The Author suggests some other Considerations, such as these, *viz.* That *Evil* not being eternal in its *Origin*, will not be eternal in its *Duration*^e; and that Punishment being a *violent State*, a forced Situation, it consequently cannot endure for ever, which, however, supposing the Truth of them, fall short of his Design; since a Period may be put to these things, whether there be a *Restoration*, or not.

HIS first Proposition, that *the Deity has but one Design in Creating things*, is either no Truth at all, or however a Truth which cannot be admitted *interminis*, without Explanation. The Happiness of the Creatures may be *one End*, but there is no Reason to make it the *sole and only End*, of the Creation. The Deity might have some Regard to himself;—to the Display and Manifestation of his own Attributes and Perfections. We at least are commanded to do every thing to the *Glory of God*, and are taught to pray for the *Advancement of his Glory*. And it is hard to conceive, how *that* should be made the *first Thing* in our Prayers, and the *chief End* of our Actions, which to the Deity himself is *no End* at all. It is no Reply to this, to say that the Happiness of his Creatures *tends* to the Glory of God; or that his Glory is display'd and promoted in their Happiness. For allowing this, still they are distinct Ideas; and *one* is not precisely the *other*. The Glory of God is display'd in the Happiness

^d See p. 353. *Conf.* p. 395. 406.

^e See p. 398. *Conf.* p. 284.

Happiness of his Creatures, and it is also display'd by other ways;—display'd even by just and righteous *Punishment*. For this is a Manifestation of some, or other, of his glorious Perfections. In short, every wise and good End accomplish'd by the Creation of the World, was intended by the Creator; for there is no reason to exclude one more than another, from a Mind, which takes in every thing, at one comprehensive View.

HE foresaw *what would befall his Creatures*; that is, He foresaw the Misery which some of them would bring upon themselves, notwithstanding all his Care, notwithstanding all the Dispositions of his good Providence, and all the Dispensations of his Grace, to prevent it. But still this was not a sufficient Reason, why he should forbear the Exercise of his *Creating Power*: Because, more good, infinitely more good, upon the whole, was produced by executing his Design, than by dropping it. If indeed he had *foreseen* that all his Creatures would become miserable, that he should be *able to make none of them happy*, or none in comparison of the rest; that is, if he had foreseen that more Evil would be produced than Good, that Evil finally, and upon the whole, would be *prepollent*; there may be some reason to say, that in such a Case, and upon such terms, He would not have exerted his *Creating Power*. Not that even *Then* any Creature could complain of being injured, if he was so far from being created necessarily miserable, that he had a fair Offer of everlasting Happiness. But whatever the Deity might, or might not, have

have done, in the Case supposed; we have no Concern with it at present; as we have all the reason in the world to think, that the *Good* produced by the Creation will be vastly *prepollent*, and that no one Individual is created necessarily and unavoidably miserable. And upon this footing I have prov'd before, that it is consistent with the Divine Perfections to create intelligent and free Beings; tho' it had been better for some of them, through their own Perverseness, if they had never been born.

THE Purpose of God is to render Men happy in a certain Order; that is, agreeable to their free Nature, and the Nature of things; and *without forcing their Liberty*. This Purpose cannot be defeated. But the Question is, whether *the Resistance of Man* may not go so far, that no Method can be found out to bring him to Repentance and Holiness, consistently with this Order, and this Purpose? I don't see how the Affirmative of this, supposes in God a *helpless Wisdom*. No Power can perform Impossibilities, no Wisdom can reconcile Contradictions. His Wisdom may produce Good out of Evil; and make these Creatures of some use or other in the Creation, in ways and methods which we are not aware of. But it may be impossible to restore them in the sense here meant, that is, to bring them to *Glory and Virtue*, by any means whatsoever. Force is intirely out of the Question, as being utterly incompetent, and incongruous to the End proposed; and moral Means may have lost all their Influence. If this be the Case, there

is no room for Wisdom to exert itself in their favour; or to contrive any methods to bring them to *Repentance and Holiness*. For Wisdom, the more perfect it is, is the farther remov'd from doing, or attempting, any thing in vain. Nor does this argue any Defect in the Divine Wisdom, or lay any Imputation upon it; any more than it is a Reflection upon Omnipotence to say, that it cannot work Contradictions. "It is not a Limitation of the Divine Goodness" (says Bp. Burnet *) nor, I would add, of his Wisdom, "to say, that some Men and some States are beyond it; no more than it is a Limitation of his Power, to say that he cannot sin, or cannot do Impossibilities: For a Goodness towards Persons not capable of becoming good, is a Goodness that does not agree with the infinite Purity and Holiness of God." Nor does this imply that God *propos'd a Design, in which he miscarries*: For he never design'd to make them happy, by destroying Liberty, by inverting Order, and in contradiction to the Nature, the Reason and Truth of things.

THE great Point therefore to be prov'd by the Advocates for a Restoration, is, that the Damned are capable of becoming good. Till this is done, the rest is all Amusement. It is idle and ridiculous to talk of Wisdom's contriving and finding out *means* of Virtue, with regard to States and Persons incapable of Virtue. And here Dr. Burnet steps in and tells us, that he cannot conceive what can hinder their Amendment, except a supernatural Obduration: *nisi divinitus indurentur,*

* Exposition. Art. i.

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durentur, unless they are harden'd by God.* Where I observe, that it is here suppos'd possible that God may harden them; and therefore such an Obduration is not impossible in the nature of things. I would ask therefore why it may not as well be conceiv'd, that free Creatures can thus harden themselves? What the Doctor suggests, "that in the future State there will be no room for Infidelity; that the *Fomes mali* will be extinguish'd; that there will be no internal Concupiscence, and no external Incentive, to feed and encourage their Vices;" supposing it all true, appears to hurt his Cause as much one way, as it can serve it another. For what is this but excluding Virtue as well as Vice? What is it saying less, than that *that* State is not a State of Probation, will not admit of any moral Discipline, and is calculated for no moral Improvement at all? Which is indeed the Truth of the Case; and though it be destructive of their Scheme, and tears it up by the Roots, it is the Amount of all they have to offer, when they would persuade us that the wicked in Hell will some time or other become good and virtuous.

HIS Argument may be reduced to this *Dilemma*: If the Beings concern'd have Reason and Liberty, they will repent; and if they have not Reason and Liberty, they are no longer to be accounted Men. The Force of which Argument consists in the Idea you annex to the word *Man*. If by that Term is meant such a Creature

* De Stat. Mort. & Refurg. p. 293.

Creature as Man is now, while he is in his Probation-State, it implies indeed Reason and Freedom. But suppose such an Agent, for the continued Abuse of these Powers, should be punish'd at last with the loss of one, or both of them, would it mend the matter at all, to dispute whether he is any longer to be call'd a Man? Suppose he is not, (as by the Supposition he is not, in the Sense of free Agency) he is still a Creature, capable of suffering those Punishments which he has brought upon himself. But we know too little what Degrees of Reason the Damn'd will enjoy, or whether any Liberty, as that implies a Power to repent, and become really good, to determine any thing satisfactorily in this Point. A late ingenious * Writer has advanced a sort of *Hypothesis*, that their Punishment will lead them into a kind of *Phrensy and Madness*. And their State of Disorder may so far at least resemble Madness, as to be equally incapable of Morality. The Faculties of their Minds, their Passions and Affections, may be so deprav'd, and their whole inward System so perverted and spoil'd, that they can no longer act, or chuse, what is right and good. Whether Beings in such a State of Disorder, are to be reckon'd *Men*, is a Point of no Consequence at all.

LET us view this matter in another light; and suppose for once that they are still real Agents, endu'd with Reason and Liberty. Does
it

* Archbishop King's Appendix to his Origin of Evil.

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it therefore necessarily follow, that they *will* repent? The State of Things may be so changed *externally*, that they will be no longer able, or have Opportunity, to *act* their Vices; but will there be a correspondent Change in the *inward* System? What Reason has Dr. Burnet to say, that there will be no *internal Concupiscence*? Will not the Mind be the same? And the same evil Temper, Dispositions, and Habits still adhere to it? However therefore they may be restrain'd from the outward Acts of Vice, they continue the same evil Beings; and love the Wickedness which they cannot commit.

BUT the Stress of the thing, it will be said, lies here; that tho' they carry their evil Habits and Dispositions with them, when they first go into Hell, yet the Punishments of that Place will *purify* them;—will bring them to a sober Sense of Things;—will make them hate those Vices which are the Cause of their Sufferings, and excite in them by degrees the Love of God, and Virtue.

IT is surprizing nevertheless, if Hell be such a State of Purification, that it should always be represented in Scripture only as a Place of Punishment. It is surprizing too, that a Place farthest remov'd from God, and his heavenly Influences, inhabited only by his most accursed Enemies, who are banished from his righteous Presence, should after all prove the most effectual School of Virtue. There is no good reason to believe that these Punishments will have any
such

such effect. To say that they will *force* them to become good, amounts to a Contradiction. Election is matter of Freedom; it cannot be forced. And all means that fall short of this, all moral Motives, all Representations of *Good* and *Evil*, may possibly be of no avail. Evil may in a manner become *their* Good. And the *unconquerable Will, and Study of Revenge* *, may defeat all Methods (should any Methods be contriv'd) to restore them. To be brief, there are two things which must concur to produce this wonderful Reformation: Their own *inward* System, or Constitution; and the System, or Constitution of things *without* them. That is, they must be really moral Agents, capable of chusing, loving, and practising Virtue; and the Place or State they are in, must be correspondent, affording them the means of Virtue, Motives to it, and Opportunities for it. Neither of which, as far as I can see, is likely to be the Case. However, it cannot be proved from Reason that this will be the Case †; and

* For never can true Reconcilement grow,
Where Wounds of deadly Hate have pierc'd so deep.
Milton.

† Since eternal Life is the free Gift of God, even to them who obey him, and their only Claim to it is by Promise, it seems an odd Attempt to undertake to prove merely from Reason, that they who would not obey him must be made Partakers of it. "No Man, says Dr. Clarke, can say 'tis unreasonable, that they who by wilful and stubborn Disobedience to their Almighty Creator, and most merciful Benefactor, and by the habitual Practice of unrepented Wickedness, have, during the State of Trial, made themselves unfit for the
S " Enjoyment

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and it seems plain from Scripture, that it will not. According to all the Representations there given of the Transactions at the Day of Judgment, the Fate of the wicked will then be decided for ever. The divine Founder of the Christian Religion may then say, what he said when he had just purchased it with his Blood, τετέλεται, *It is finished* *. Having accomplished the number of his Elect, he delivers up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; and, as no Man can, (nor, from the Foundation of the World to the End of it, ever did) come to the Father but by him †; and his Offices of *Mediation* are now at an End, and the Purposes of God by him, of bringing many Sons unto Glory || are fulfilled; the Mystery, or the whole mysterious Dispensation of God in Christ, [τελεσθῆν ‡] will be finished. He and his Saints take possession of the everlasting Kingdom, and the Door is shut.

Without

“ Enjoyment of that Happiness which God has prepared
 “ for them that love and obey him; should be *eternally*
 “ *rejected*, and *excluded* from it.” But bare *Deprivation*
of Happiness cannot be all. That excellent Writer goes
 on to prove unanswerably, that there must be some *sensi-*
ble and positive Punishment, besides the mere negative Loss
 of Happiness.—“ And then as to the *Duration* of this Pu-
 “ nishment; no Man can presume in our present State of
 “ Ignorance and Darkness to be able truly to judge,
 “ barely by the Strength of his own natural Reason, what
 “ *in this respect* is or is not consistent with the Wisdom
 “ and Justice and Goodness of the supreme Governour of
 “ the World; since we neither know the *Place*, nor
 “ *Kind*, nor *Manner*, nor *Circumstances*, nor *Degrees*,
 “ nor *all the Ends and Uses* of the final Punishment of the
 “ wicked.” *Evidences of Religion*, p. 360, &c.

* John xix. 30. † Ch. xiv. 6. || Heb. ii. 10.

‡ Rev. x. 7.

*Without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers *, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lye.* And according to the whole Tenour and Drift of the New Testament, there is no After-admission for such as these: No Intimations dropt, from one End of it to the other, of their Re-establishment, or Recovery. On the contrary, it appears so evident, from all Authorities sacred and primitive, that in *Gehenna*, or Hell, there is no Repentance; that the greater Part of those who deny the Eternity of the Punishment, chuse to embrace the *Hypothesis* of Annihilation; contending that the Damn'd, so far from being restor'd to Happiness, will at last be utterly reduced to nothing. And they think that the Scripture-Expressions of *Death, the second Death, Perdition, Destruction*, (θάνατος, φθορά, ὀλεθρος, ἀπώλεια) imply so much. Which however appears to be a Mistake, from what has already been observ'd in the *second Chapter*: But of the Point itself I shall treat more particularly in the *following*.

* Ch. xxii. 15.

C H A P. V.

Concerning the Annihilation of the Wicked: And also concerning Repentance in Hades.

ANnihilation being a real Effect, it must be produced by some Cause. This Cause must either be internal, or external. If the latter, it must either be God himself, or some inferiour Agent, or Instrument. And the Proof of this must be derived either from Experience, or Reason, or the Word of God. The first of these can afford little Evidence in the Case, since there is no Instance, or Example, of Annihilation in Nature. In material Substances we see great Changes, and Alterations; but none of them are absolutely reduced to nothing. The Modifications of *Matter* are infinitely varied, but not one Particle of Matter itself is annihilated: Nor can all the Art, or all the Power of Man, or any Creature, utterly destroy it. *Omnia mutantur; nihil interit.* And as Bodies cannot reduce each other to nothing by their mutual Actions upon one another, so neither have they any internal Tendency to Annihilation. They no more tend to *unmake* themselves, than they did to *make* themselves; but naturally persevere in their own present State.

If this be the case with regard to material Substances, or Bodies, it should hold, one would think,

think, at least equally with reference to thinking Substances, or Minds. These are Beings of a higher Order, of a far more excellent Nature, and which resemble the supreme Being himself. It cannot therefore be imagined that they should hold their Existence by a more precarious Tenure than the former, or be more liable to be reduced to nothing. And if the Actions of material Substances upon one another, cannot annihilate Bodies; it is not to be suppos'd, allowing that Matter may act upon Mind, that any such Action should be able to destroy it. Created Minds cannot annihilate Bodies; and to suppose that any Action of Bodies should be able to annihilate Minds, is to set the more excellent Nature many degrees below the inferiour, and to subject the noblest of God's Creatures to *that* which is lowest in the Scale of Existence. It is farther to be observ'd, that as material Substances cannot annihilate Minds, so neither can these thinking Substances annihilate themselves. This is plain from Experience. Besides, this Absurdity would follow, that if they had any such Power, they would be able to elude the Justice of God, when they deserv'd Punishment, by destroying their own Existence. It holds, again, equally strong at least with respect to thinking Substances as to material, that they have no *internal* Tendency to Annihilation. God himself is a Mind, or Spirit; and therefore Minds, as Minds, can have no unnatural Tendency to fall back into nothing. The more they resemble him, that is, the more pure and perfect Minds they are, the

rather are they remov'd from the State, and from the Capacity, of Non-Existence. If there be any *Phænomena* arising from the Union of the Mind with Matter, which seem to betoken a Tendency towards utter Extinction, all true Philosophers know that they do *but seem* to do so; and that the Decays and Disorders of the Body only suspend, or deaden, the Exercise of the Powers of the Mind, without affecting its Existence. Besides, they are contradicted by contrary *Appearances*; such as prove the Mind to be vigorous and active, when the Body is quite the Reverse, as in Sleep, and even at the Approach of Death.

IF then thinking Substances cannot be destroyed by the Action of Bodies,—if they cannot destroy themselves,—and, if they have no internal Tendency to Annihilation; there is but another way to reduce them to nothing, and that is, by supposing that they have power to deprive one another of Existence. But it is not easily conceivable, how I who cannot annihilate myself, should be able to annihilate another man. Transfer this, if you please, to pure Minds, or to any Order of Beings superiour to Man, (excluding only the supreme Being, whose Almighty Power as it made all things of nothing, can reduce them to nothing again,) and it is still inconceivable how any Creature, who has no such power over his own Being, should have it over the Being of another. But if Man cannot annihilate Man, may not an Angel annihilate him?

him? And may not a superiour Angel annihilate one of a lower Order, or one that kept not his first Estate? No; at least neither of these is clear, nor so much as probable: It being more agreeable to Reason to think, that this is the Prerogative of God only, who alone can give Being, and alone can take it away. Whoever asserts this annihilating Power to any Creature, must do it *gratis*, and without Proof. *And why should we maintain a Point gratis, and barely for maintaining's sake?* Especially a Point that has a *bad Tendency*? Since, were all other Arguments wanting, this itself would be one against it *. The Result of these Reflexions is, that Annihilation must be the Effect of the Power of God †.

I

* See this Argument applied in another Case by the Author of the *Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*. Sect. ii.

† There is a common Notion in the World; That things would fall back into nothing of themselves, if they were not preserv'd by the same infinite Power that made them: But without question it is an Act of the same infinite Power to reduce a Being to nothing, that it is to bring a Being out of nothing: So whatever has once a Being, must of its nature continue still to be, without any new Causality or Influence. This must be acknowledged, unless it can be said, that a Tendency to Annihilation is the Consequent of a created Being: But as this would make the Preservation of the World to be a continued Violence to a natural Tendency that is in all things; so there is no more reason to imagine that Beings have a Tendency to Annihilation, than that nothing had a Tendency to Creation. It is absurd to think that any thing can have a Tendency to that which is essentially opposite to itself, and is destructive of it. Bishop Burnet's *Exposit. Art. i.*

I DON'T offer these Remarks as positive Proofs against Annihilation, but as a sort of presumptive Arguments on our Side. One sometimes hears Men talk of Annihilation, as if it were one of the most common Effects in the World; an Event that would come to pass of course. And yet it is nothing but a Notion that has crept into the Heads of philosophical Men, without having any thing to answer to it in Nature or Fact. Thus, as to the Subject under debate, *Hell-fire*, they cry, *is a consuming Fire, and the Torments of that Place will reduce them to nothing.* This is easily said; but the Reason, and Philosophy of it, is not so apparent. Supposing, (not granting,) that this Fire will have the same Effect upon the future Body, that the Action of Fire has now upon the present; it will then indeed, in a vulgar Sense, destroy it: That is, it will so destroy the Texture and Organization of the Parts, that the Soul can no longer inhabit, or act upon it in Union; from whence must ensue a second Separation. But then, at the same time, the Soul itself, which is in effect the Man, will still subsist entire and active, still capable of Pleasure and Pain. Nor can all the Action of all the material Substances in the World deprive it of its Existence. Men
are

There is an Argument of another kind, which may be seen in *Watts's Philosophical Essays*; *Essay xi. Sect. 4.* Hoc duntaxat certò affirmari potest, *eum solum* qui substantiis existentiam primùm dedit, posse eandem eis eripere:—*Jo. Clerici Ontologiæ Cap. vi, ad finem,*

are sometimes burnt to death here, God's Martyrs and the Devil's. Yet no Reason, no Religion, natural or revealed, will allow us to suppose, that together with this mortal Life, a final Period is put to all Life, to all Sensation and Being. And if the Soul can survive the Shock of such an Event as this, what is there else that is likely to destroy it? It was reckoned of old an Absurdity in the *Stoicks*, that tho' they held that the Soul survived the Body, yet they would not allow that it would exist for ever. *Stoici autem usuram nobis largiuntur, tanquam cornicibus: diu mansuros aiunt animos, semper negant:* says *Cicero* *. And he goes on, in the very beginning of the next Section, to shew how this was absurd; as it was allowing what was most difficult in the whole Affair, and at the same time denying what was not only credible in itself, but a Consequence of their own Concession. For if the Soul can survive the Dissolution of the Body,

* *Tusculan. i. C. 31.*

Numquid igitur est causæ, quin amicos nostros Stoicos dimittamus; eos dico, qui aiunt animos manere, è corpore cum excefferint, sed non semper? Istos verò: qui, quod tota in hac causa difficillimum est, suscipiant, posse animum manere corpore vacantem: illud autem, quod non modò facile ad credendum est, sed eo concessò, quod volunt, consequens, id certè non dant, ut, cum diu permanferit, ne intreat. *To which the Pupil replies, Bene reprehendis: et se isto modo res habet. Cap. 32. p. 260. Ed. Olivet.*

The learned Editor indeed offers a Conjecture, that part of the former Sentence, beginning at *istos verò*, belongs to the Pupil. And then the Instructor replies, *Bene reprehendis, &c.* But which way soever we read the Passage, they both condemn the Conduct of the *Stoicks* in this Affair.

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Body, and exist in a State of Separation from it, what reason is there to imagine that it will ever perish?

BUT, tho' I have, for Argument's sake, supposed that this future Fire may thus destroy the Body, and once again separate the Soul from it; yet is it far more reasonable, agreeably to ancient Testimonies and Tradition, to believe the contrary. As to the Philosophy of the thing, it amounts only to this; that because our common Fire has this Effect upon the present Body, therefore that future Fire will have the same on the Body after the Resurrection. Which sure is a very poor Argument, or none at all. We know neither the Nature of Hell-fire, nor the Nature and Qualities of the Resurrection-body, perfectly enough, to lay any Stress on such Reasonings. I don't say that this Argument is made use of by our Adversaries, and produced in form. But it is the Ground of their Opinion, so far as the *Reason* of the Case is concerned. Dr. *Whitby*, for instance, whose Sentiments on this Point are well known, which he offers however only as a Conjecture, thinks that the Bodies of the Wicked must be consumed by that Fire; or else there would be *a constant Miracle* *. But they are only our own gross Conceptions of the matter which make a Miracle needful. Surely there may be Resemblance and Analogy enough in those future Punishments,

* Appendix to the first Chapter of the second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*.

nishments, to the painful Sensations which are excited by Fire, to apply that Name to them in a very proper Sense; tho' *all* the Effects are not exactly the same with those, which the Action of our ordinary Fire produces on the present human Body. It may be as agreeable to the Nature of that Fire, *not to consume*, or, to the Nature of those Bodies, *not to be consumed*, as the contrary is agreeable to the Nature of common Fire, and the Nature of the present Body. And such a Constitution of things may no more require a *constant Miracle*, than that which prevails now. But not to run into any nice Speculations, which may only serve to breed Dispute; this is certain, that Hell-fire will be such as will torment the Devil and his Angels, for whom it is prepared, as well as wicked Men. And can common Fire do this *? Can that act upon Spirits incorporeal? Or, if at all corporeal, (which however is not hastily to be taken for granted) with Bodies so infinitely subtle and spiritual, that common Fire does not seem likely to have much Force upon them.

ALL

* The Sentiments of Antiquity on this head may be seen in *Suicer's Thesaurus*, *sub voc.* * ἄγγελος ἐν δαίμων.

Those who ascribed any thing of Corporeity to Angels, were induced to it chiefly by their mistaken Sense of *Gen.* vi. 2. The Fact there mentioned they thought could not be accounted for without it. Besides, the word *Body*, [σῶμα] was of very indeterminate meaning; and some who applied it to them might only mean that they were *Substances*, not *Shadows*, or *Nothings*. This one would think was the Case of those, who called their Bodies *immaterial*, [σῶματα ἄϋλα] which in our modern Notions is a Contradiction.

ALL that I intend by this, is only to shew, that the future Fire, which will torment the Bodies of the Wicked, will not utterly consume them : I mean, there arises no clear Evidence that it will do so merely from the Reason and Philosophy of the thing itself. It may be otherwise for any thing we can tell. And our Ignorance of the Nature and Properties both of that Fire, and of those Bodies, should keep us from being positive in the point. True Reason will not be hasty to decide, where it is so very unqualified to judge. Experience supplies us with no Evidence of the Annihilation of any thing whatsoever ; but, as far as it is interested in the Question at all, is rather a Presumption against it. True Philosophy teaches us, that the Souls of Men will neither cease to exist of themselves, nor can be destroyed by the Action of other Creatures. At least, this is allowed by the Patrons of Annihilation, that the Agents in the Destruction of the Body, are not capable of destroying the Soul *. And it may be nothing but a gross unphilosophical Imagination, that makes them think them capable of destroying the Body itself. So far therefore the Cause seems to go against Annihilation. And if these Reflexions do not amount to demonstrative Proof, they are at least so strong a Prejudice against it, that we have reason to expect, and insist, that the Testimonies produced from Scripture, to which the Appeal next lies, should speak fully and clearly to the Point, before we

admit

* See the Quotation from Mr. W. N°. X.

admit it. But do they so? Where is the Text that says plainly, that the time will come when the Wicked shall be no more? When they will be as if they had never been born *? When their Torments will reduce them to nothing? Or, deprive them of all Sense of Being? Some such plain Declarations as these would be to the purpose. But to infer Annihilation from a few Scripture-terms, which appear to have no such sense or meaning in Scripture, is doing nothing. Dr. *Whitby* seems to rest his Opinion more upon the Reason he gives for it, *viz.* That the Preservation of the Bodies of the Wicked will require a *constant Miracle*, which is not to be expected, than upon any Texts of Scripture. However, those which he points out to us, have been considered in our *second Chapter*, N^o. LXIX, XC. To what is there said, I shall only add, that supposing *Destruction* and *Perdition* in

* 'Tis to be observed, that when our Saviour came nearest the expressing this matter of Annihilation, he chooseth two other Phrases, (not this of Death, or any thing that way inclining) *having never been born, and having a Mill-stone hanged about the Neck, and being cast into the midst of the Sea*, which by an imperfect Resemblance seemeth meant on purpose to signify Annihilation: And yet it is also observable to the main Question, that either of these States (and so Annihilation) is better and more desirable, than the Lot which in God's Decree awaits a Betrayer of Christ, a wicked man, for that one Fact. Dr. *Hammond*: *Judgment worthy of God*: Vol. i. of his *Works*, p. 710.

The learned Author proceeds to shew that the other terms usually alledged in this Argument, (*ἀπώλεια, ὀλεθρος*, the *second Death*, &c.) do not mean any such thing in Scripture as Annihilation.

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in those Texts meant Annihilation, (which they do not) it would be perfectly arbitrary and unreasonable to limit this to the *Bodies* only of the Wicked; since the Texts speak of the Destruction and Perdition of *Men, ungodly Men, who knew not God, and obeyed not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*. These are to be *punished with everlasting Destruction*; but how the Annihilation, or Dissolution, merely of their Bodies, can be a Punishment to them, it is hard to conceive. It must be rather a Deliverance and Release, to be separated from their Bodies, in that Place of Torment. So that the Texts cannot possibly favour Dr. *Whitby's Hypothesis*. As to Mr. *Whiston's* Criticisms and Reflections, I have taken notice of them in the two first Chapters, under the respective Texts; which I need not here repeat *.

BUT

* “ Ἀπόλλυμαι, signifies very often no more than to
 “ die, or to suffer great Troubles and Miseries; though
 “ from such Expressions in the New Testament some Pa-
 “ trons of loose and atheistical Principles would infer,
 “ that there are no future Punishments of wicked Men,
 “ but that upon Death they are entirely annihilated. The
 “ Classic Authors take this and the synonymous Words
 “ for a State of great Trouble and Perplexity; but never
 “ in this Sense that *Latitudinarians* wish it might be taken
 “ in; but can never prove that it is. *Herodotus* has
 “ ἀπολλύμενος for a Person departed this Life, and living
 “ in Happiness in another: “Ουτε ἀποθνήσκειν ἐωϋτὸς νε-
 “ μίζουσι, ἵεναι δὲ τὸν ἀπολλύμενον παρὰ Σάμολξιν δαίμονα,
 “ they do not suppose that they who die are finally extinct, but
 “ that the Person that departs this Life goes to their God
 “ Zamolxis. We have in *Xenophon* ἀπολώλει τῷ Φόβῳ.
 “ So Ἀπωλόμην δούτηνος ἔκετ’ εἰμὶ δὴ in *Euripides*. ’Tis
 “ very

BUT as the whole Strength of the Objection is collected together, and presented in one View, by another Writer, I shall give you his Words at length. Thus then reasons *the Moral Philosopher* : “ The Fire which is utterly to consume, destroy, and burn up the Wicked in the last Day, is called everlasting Fire, because its Effects will be everlasting, and there can be no possible Recovery from this second Death. And thus the Fire which consumed the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* is call’d everlasting Fire, because those Cities were destroyed for ever, never to be restored more. And thus this last destroying Fire is said to be unquenchable, because no Power or Policy can extinguish it, or deliver the Ungodly out of it, till it has utterly consumed and destroyed the Subject. But, that the second Death which wicked Men must undergo after they have been raised, and received their Sentence, should be an eternal Life in Torments, without ever dying more ; that a consuming and destroying, should be an unconsuming, immortalizing Fire ; that the mortal and corruptible Bodies with which
“ the

“ very common in this sense likewise in *Latin* Authors.
“ So Destruction and Perdition in sacred Writers only
“ express incurable Despair and endless Miseries ; because
“ that eternal Destruction is declared through the whole
“ New Testament to be only a State of extreme Sufferings, and the sharpest Sense of Guilt and divine Vengeance ; and not Loss of Being, or Annihilation.”
Blackwall's Sacred Classics, Vol I. p. 178, &c. 8vo.

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“ the Wicked shall be raised, should be im-
 “ mortal and uncorruptible, which is the sole
 “ Privilege of the Just ; that eternal Death
 “ and utter Destruction should signify Immor-
 “ tality, and eternal Life in Misery ; and that
 “ when the professed End and Design of Christ’s
 “ coming into the World, was to destroy the
 “ Devil and his Kingdom, and all his Works,
 “ and to abolish and put an end to Sin and
 “ Death for ever ; that he should in the Event
 “ come to establish the Devil’s Empire for ever
 “ in Hell over the far greater part of Mankind,
 “ and to perpetuate and immortalize Sin and
 “ Hell, instead of extirpating and destroying
 “ them : These are such gross and glaring
 “ Contradictions, as cannot be reconciled to the
 “ natural Use of Words in any Language.”

THERE are several Propositions contain’d,
 or implied, in this noble Chain of Reasoning,
 which we must take to pieces, and examine
 distinctly. *The Fire which is utterly to con-*
sume, destroy, and burn up the Wicked, &c.
 Where it is taken for granted, contrary to all
 Philosophy and Reason, that Fire can thus *ut-*
terly consume, destroy, and burn up such Beings
 as Men : Beings composed of Body and Soul,
 the latter of which it is certain no Action of
 Fire can reduce to nothing. And for any thing
 this Writer can prove, or any one else, this may
 be the case of the former also. If then this
 Fire cannot utterly consume and destroy the
 Wicked, it cannot be call’d *everlasting* and *un-*
quenchable

quenchable for that reason; or because no Power or Policy can extinguish it, or deliver the ungodly out of it, till it has utterly consum'd and destroy'd the Subject. It cannot, in the sense intended, destroy the Subject at all. Nor does the Scripture any where declare, or intimate, that this is the Ground and Reason of its being called *everlasting* and *unquenchable*. On the contrary, as the primary and most obvious Notion which the Words themselves suggest, is that of the real everlasting Existence and Duration of the Fire itself, so the Scripture-Representations confirm this Notion, and put it beyond all reasonable Doubt. For it is there such an *everlasting Fire*, as is also an *everlasting Punishment*; where they are *tormented Day and Night, for ever and ever* *. As to the Instance he alleges of "the Fire which consum'd the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah," that Point has been already consider'd under N^o XCIV. It is far from being indisputable that *that* is the Fire, which is there called *everlasting*; or if it be, it is not merely upon this account because it consumed those Cities, but because of its long, very long, Duration. In this view, together with the *Severity* of that signal Vengeance, which was so justly executed on that abandon'd People, it may well be consider'd as an Emblem † of that

* See N^o XCVIII.

† Externus ille, inquit *Witsius*, atque hoc sensu æternus Ignis, quo urbes conflagrarunt, est ὑπόδειγμα, exemplar aliis ad validam Monelam ob oculos positum, 2 Pet. ii. 6. et simul figura Ignis vere æterni, quo, dum hæc scribebat Judas, T
excruciabantur

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that Fire which in the strictest sense is *unquenchable*.

WHAT this Writer next suggests is concerning the *second Death*, which he thinks can never import *eternal Life in Torments, without ever dying more*: For which matter, see N° LXIX, and N° XCIX. It evidently does import This in St. *John's* Language; and if there be any absurdity in it, how came Philosophers, both before and after his time, to be so fond of the same Figure? Is any thing more usual with them, than to call a miserable Life by the name of Death? By which Rule eternal miserable Life, or Existence, would be eternal Death. When Souls in their Revolt from God forsake the Divine Life, they *die*, says *Hierocles*; not that they lose their Being, (for an immortal Nature cannot cease to *be*), but their Well-Being. Ignorance and Impiety are the Death of a reasonable Essence *. In the same view, and agreeably

excruciabantur scortatorum animæ. Urbes ipsæ habent ὑπόδειγμα, vel ἀντίτυπον αἰωνίᾳ πυρός, sed improbi homines sustinent δίκην πυρός. *Ultimam hanc sententiam et mihi placere non diffiteor.* Wolfius in loc.

* *Hier. in Carm. Pythag. ad vers. i.* Vide etiam *Macrobi. in Somn. Scip. Lib. i. Cap. xi.* Nam et qui primum Pythagoram et qui postea Platonem secuti sunt, duas esse mortes, unam Animæ, Animalis alteram prodiderunt: mori Animal cum Anima discedit è corpore, ipsam vero Animam mori asserentes cum à simplici et individuo fonte naturæ in membra corporea dissipatur. *For Christian Antiquity, see Suicer's Thesaurus, under the Word Θάνατος, in the two last Articles, Mors Infidelium, et Mors æterna.* And see the like Objection in the mouth of *Smalcus* answered by *Ashwell, De Socina et Socinianismo, p. 191.*

agreeably to the same Scheme of Speech, they represent the present Life, while we sojourn in the Darkness of this World, and are fetter'd in the Prison of the Body, as *Death*. And when we shall be remov'd out of it, and return to the celestial Light of our native Country, we shall live : *Quò cum venerimus, tum denique vivemus. Nam hæc quidem vita mors est* *. There is therefore no Impropriety in St. *John's* calling the future miserable Existence of the Wicked, by the name of the *second Death*; nothing contrary to the natural Use of Words in any Language; which is all the Moral Philosopher's Argument here turns upon. Nay, I appeal to any unprejudiced Person, whether the Absurdity does not lie on the other side ? viz. In supposing that St. *John* means by the *second Death* only utter Extinction of Being. What is there in This that can hurt the Wicked, or that they can fear ? What is there in it worse than the first Death ? And yet it seems to be represented as a Punishment infinitely more dreadful ; which it can never be to the Wicked, in the sense of Annihilation. Considering only the Troubles and Miseries of the present Life, Philosophers have thought Deprivation of Sense and Being a Privilege, and proposed it as a Consolation against the Fear of Death †. And can This be reckon'd

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* Cic. Tusculan. Lib. i. Cap. 31.

† Nam si supremus ille dies non extinctionem, sed commutationem affert loci, quid optabilius ? Sin autem perimit ac delet omnino, quid melius quàm in medijs vitæ laboribus obdormiscere, et ita conniventem somno consopiri sempiterno ? *Tusc. i. C. 49.*

a Punishment to the Damn'd in Hell? Or be esteem'd as the severest Effect of God's righteous Vengeance upon his most implacable Enemies? It can never be. To proceed; His calling this Fire a *consuming and destroying* Fire, which can never be an *unconsuming and immortalizing* Fire, is nothing but his own Mistake. For as we deny, on the one hand, that it either is, or is call'd, a *consuming and destroying* Fire; so neither do we assert, on the other, that it is an *immortalizing* Fire. It does not *make* the Wicked immortal, but *find* them so. If any one in this sense will still call it an *immortalizing* Fire, he has his liberty: we will have no strife about Words. But to be rais'd, he says, with *Bodies immortal and uncorruptible, is the sole Privilege of the Just*. Which if he had as plainly proved, as he has positively asserted, he had gain'd something. Not but that even then his Conclusion would be wider than his Premises. For utter Extinction of Being, both of Body and Soul, cannot be inferr'd from the Corruption and Mortality of the Body only. But here is no Proof produced, that the *Bodies* with which the Wicked shall be rais'd, will be capable of any future Dissolution. They will not indeed be rais'd to that glorious and happy Immortality *which is the sole Privilege of the Just*; but they will be so rais'd and united to their respective Souls, as never more to be divided from them, since *Death and Hades*, both the *Act* and *State* of Separation, will be destroy'd.

HIS last Argument, which only remains to be considered, sets forth, "That the professed
" Design of Christ's coming into the World,
" being to destroy the Devil, his Works and
" Kingdom, and to put an end to Sin and
" Death for ever; it cannot be imagined that
" in the Event he should establish the Devil's
" Empire for ever in Hell over the far greater
" part of Mankind, and perpetuate Sin and
" Hell, instead of destroying them." As if
truly, Hell; which is the Place of the Devil's
Punishment, would be the Seat of his Empire!
No, his Kingdom is in this World; subsists,
and is supported by wicked Men here, and is
not a little promoted, it is to be feared, by such
wretched Writings as this Man's. The Works of
the Devil, which Christ came to destroy, he has
destroyed in some Degree, and is daily destroy-
ing, more or less, not by mere Power and
Force, but by such means as only can destroy
real Wickedness in moral Agents. These are
the Influence of his own most holy Example,
the Purity of his Doctrine, the Sanctions of
his Laws, by which Life and Immortality are
brought to light on the one hand, and the
Wrath of God revealed against all Unrighte-
ousness on the other, and all his manifold Gifts
of Grace. And if Men will not be wrought
on by these to take his Yoke upon them volun-
tarily, and become his Subjects by free Choice,
they will at last, as Enemies, be put under his
Feet; rendered incapable of giving him any

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more Opposition, and punished as they deserve. And is not this sufficiently destroying the Works and Kingdom of the Devil? But to destroy Hell, that is the Punishment of Sin, in order to destroy Sin, is an Expedient much more likely to encourage it. There is no moral Evil in righteous Punishment ; and if it be consistent with the moral Character of the great Governor and Judge of the World, to permit Men and Devils to *sin*, it is surely consistent with his Character to *punish* them ; and that too, if their Existence admit of it, and the Reasons of things require it, *for ever*.

I AM willing to persuade myself, that it appears from these Observations, that there will be no Annihilation of the Wicked. All Appearances are against it, both from Experience, Philosophy, and Revelation. So that if Men will still go on to maintain it, they must do it *gratis*, not only without Evidence, but contrary to it ;—contrary to Evidence as clear as a reasonable Man would expect, in a Question of this nature. However, I am ready to own after all, that it is *possible*, because there is a Power in being that is *able* to effect it. God *can* reduce them to nothing. But, besides that we are not to argue from mere Power, it seems plain from his Word that he never *will*. All the Pretence for it from Scripture lies in two or three Expressions, which import no such thing ; and which cannot be interpreted to that Sense, without doing the greatest Violence to many other
other

other Passages and Descriptions, relating to the same Subject. Add to this, that there is a Consideration or two of another kind, which renders this Affair of God's annihilating the Wicked improbable, in the Eye of Reason. One is, that it ill suits with the Idea of his infinite Perfections, to suppose him reduced to the Necessity of totally destroying such Creatures, whom he made naturally immortal. Is not the Universe large enough, for God to dispose of them into States suitable to their Natures? And cannot his Wisdom dispose of them into such States and Places as are proper for them, and proportionable to their Deserts, without destroying and taking away their Being*? In this way they may be made subservient to more Purposes of Providence than we are acquainted with; but to annihilate them, besides that it is the bungling Work of *doing* and *undoing*, is to make them of no use at all. If it be said that annihilating them will be an Act of Favour to them, this is the other Consideration against it; which take in the Words of Dr. *Whitby* †: “ God is not obliged to annihilate
“ the Souls of wicked Men, for then it must
“ be so on this account, because he is obliged
“ to put them out of that Misery which they
“ have brought upon themselves by their own

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“ Folly,

* Dr. *Carke's* Letter to Mr. *Dodwell*, p. 11. and p. 62.
—We hear nothing of their *Annihilation*: As indeed it would be very strange we should; for this would be as much as to say, God had made such *Beings* as he could not continue in being with Consistency with his own Attributes. — *Letter concerning Origen*, p. 73.

† Appendix to 2 Thess. Ch. i.

“ Folly, and Rebellions; and if so, since this must
 “ certainly be an Act, not of strict Justice, but
 “ of Grace and Favour, God must be bound to
 “ shew an Act of Grace and Favour towards
 “ Men, purely because they have provoked and
 “ rebell’d against him, *i. e.* because they have
 “ done that which renders them the proper
 “ Objects of his Hatred and his Indignation,
 “ and be obliged to save Men from that Misery
 “ which by their stubborn Disobedience to all
 “ his Calls and Admonitions, his Exhortations,
 “ and all the gracious Methods his Providence
 “ had used to preserve them from it, they wil-
 “ fully have brought upon themselves. Whereas
 “ indeed *the Riches of his Goodness*, being de-
 “ signed *to lead Men to Repentance*, or to en-
 “ courage them in the ways of Holiness and
 “ Piety, hath only for its proper Object such as
 “ are capable of being made the better by it;
 “ it cannot therefore be the Goodness and Mer-
 “ cy of a God to shew Kindness to Persons ob-
 “ stinately and incorrigibly wicked, because it
 “ cannot be the Goodness and Mercy of a Being
 “ infinitely just and holy; for seeing all the Di-
 “ vine Perfections must agree together, that can-
 “ not be a Divine Perfection which contradicts
 “ any other Perfection.”

I MIGHT proceed to confirm my Point from
 the Testimonies of the Primitive Writers. But,
 besides that this would be too tedious a Work,
 it is the less necessary, because the Truth suf-
 ficiently appears, notwithstanding all his Dis-
 guise, from the Authorities collected even by Mr.

Whiston

Whiston himself. The first Piece with which he begins his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers, after he has done with what he calls the Books of the *New Testament*, is the Fragment of *Josephus* concerning *Hades*. And it is remarkable that this Author, tho' he asserts the Wicked shall receive their Bodies at the Resurrection subject to *the same Diseases wherein they died*, yet is clearly of opinion that they will not undergo any future Dissolution. To these, says he, *belong an unquenchable and endless Fire; and a certain fiery Worm, not dying, nor destroying the Body; but continuing its Eruption out of the Body, with never-ceasing Grief*. For a Man to attempt to gloss away such a Testimony as this, only shews that he is capable of *practising* upon any thing that stands in his way. Some other of the Testimonies which he produces are so expressly against him, that he has no way to rid his hands of them but by calling one a *Poetical Description*, another a *Philosophical Romance*; by which sort of Expedients one may invalidate any Testimonies whatsoever. *Arnobius* indeed seems to speak to his purpose; but it is to be consider'd that *Arnobius* was hardly a *Christian* when he wrote his Book. Nor does he profess in the particular Point before us to be guided by the Authority of Scripture, or any *Christian Writer*; but by the Authority of *Plato*. And here indeed lies the Root of the Matter. It was vain Philosophy that made Men affect to *be wise above what is written*. *Origen* is noted by *Photius* for studying to bring the *Greek Mythology*

thology into the Church of God *. His singular Conceits might find some Countenance there, but there are no Traces of them to be met with in the Scripture. And his being so *distinguish'd* by them is a plain Argument, that they differ'd from the common and received Doctrine of the Catholick Church †. *Windet* ‡ seems to think that *Arnobius* borrowed his Notion of the Jews; which is not so likely. But wherever he borrow'd it, 'tis certain he had it not from the Scripture, which affords no Evidence that the Wicked shall be *annihilated, and come to nothing; and so avoid their Pains by being dissolv'd for ever*. As the Confession of an Adversary is of some weight, I shall conclude with *that* of *Crellius*, who says, that neither does the Scripture assert, nor any Reason evince, that God will annihilate the Souls of the Wicked after the Day of Judgment. *Animas impiorum Deum post Judicium annihilaturum, nec Scriptura asserit, nec Ratio evincit ulla, multò autem minus,*

* *Photii Epist.* i. p. 11. See also Mr. *Ridley's* Lecture-Sermons, p. 174.

† Quis enim catholicus Christianus vel doctus vel indoctus non vehementer exhorreat eam quam dicit malorum purgationem, id est, etiam eos qui hanc vitam in flagitiis & facinoribus & sacrilegiis atque impietatibus quamlibet maximis finierunt, ipsum etiam postremo Diabolum, atque Angelos ejus, quamvis post longissima tempora, purgatos atque liberatos regno Dei lucique restitui? Et rursus post longissima tempora omnes qui liberati sunt, ad hæc mala denuo relabi & reverti, & has vices alternantes Beatitudinum & Miseriarum rationalis Creaturæ semper fuisse, semperque fore? *Aug. de Hæres. Cap. 43.*

‡ De vita functorum Statu, Sect. ix.

minus, quod idem nunc faciat. [Vide vol. 4. p. 533. Problem. N. Cum Solut. J. C.]

I SHALL now at the End of this Chapter add a few Pages concerning the Doctrine of Repentance in *Hades*. It is of no great Consequence perhaps to the main Point, whether that Word is used in Scripture in a general Sense, so as to denote the State of all departed Souls both good and bad, or only *that* of the latter. St. *Austin* somewhere says, that he no where meets with it, (or, what is the same thing, the Word that answers to it in *Latin*,) in the Canonical Scripture, taken in a good Acceptation *. But the Question is, whether it is not used in a sense indifferent and general, including the State of all departed Souls, abstracting from their Happiness, or Misery. It does not, it is acknowledged, particularly denote the State of good and happy Souls;

* Proinde, ut dixi, nondum inveni, & adhuc quæro, nec mihi occurrit *Inferos* alicubi in bono posuisse Scripturam, duntaxat Canonicam.—— Quamquam et illud me nondum invenisse confiteor, *Inferos* appellatos ubi Justorum animæ requiescunt. No; and the Reason is, because it has a more complex Idea, denoting the State, or Place, of all Souls whatsoever. He might have observ'd, on the other hand, that it does not signify peculiarly the Place ubi Impiorum animæ cruciantur. If Circumstances in a Text sometimes limit it to that Sense, yet that does not make the Word itself to be of an ill Sense. Any more than other Texts in which it is used, which point out a State of Happiness, make it to be of a good Sense. It retains the Generality of its Meaning in both Cases; and it is something else in the Text, or Context, or Character of the Person, or the like, that gives us the Idea of Happiness or Misery.

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Souls; but neither does it, in an exclusive Sense, denote the State of those that are miserable. The Affair of Happiness or Misery may indeed often be determined by the Context where the Word is used, or by other Circumstances; but never merely from the Use and Import of the Word itself; which, where it does not mean the *Grave* only, the Receptacle of the Body, denotes that invisible Place, or State, which is the Receptacle or Habitation of Souls till the Day of Judgment*. But there is no necessity to intermix any verbal Disputes in the Question before us. Be this as it will, what follows is certain; that with regard to the Generality of the Christian World, (all, except those who shall then be found *alive*,) there is an Interval, some Space of Time, more or less, and to many a very long one, between the Day of each Man's Death and the Day of the general Judgment. The Question therefore is, the only one that is of practical moment, and in which alone Christians as such are now concern'd, whether they who die impenitently in their Sins, and consequently without Pardon in this World, can repent in the Interval mention'd, so as to obtain Pardon at the last Day. It is obvious, that the Question thus stated is so distinct from that other, *viz.* whether Christ, or his Apostles, preach'd the Gospel to the Souls in *Hades* who had liv'd in the

* See *Ger. Joh. Vossii Theses Theolog.* Disputatio Sexta, De Statu Animæ, p. 94, &c. in 4to. And *Suicer* sub voce.

the Ages before the Gospel, that the Proof of this, (if it could be prov'd,) would by no means be a Proof likewise of the Point in debate. The Cases are quite different; and supposing that they preach'd in *Hades* to the Souls of Patriarchs, and Prophets, and holy Men of old, or to all the Souls that were then in *Hades*; yet this does not prove that the Souls of wicked Christians will repent in *Hades*, or that the Gospel will be any more preach'd to them; since it was preach'd to them all their life-long, and they all their life-long disobey'd it.

BUT because it may be suspected that if there ever were any Preaching and Repentance in *Hades*, there may probably be something of the same kind still, I shall examine the Texts of Scripture on which that Opinion is built. And they are, (besides those that have been remark'd on already in their respective Places,) principally two*, viz. 1 *Pet.* iii. 18, 19, 20. and Ch. iv. 6. In the first of these the Apostle says, that Christ *being put to death in the Flesh, was quickned by the Spirit*; (not kept or preserv'd alive in his human Soul, or Spirit, according to the harsh Interpretation of some;) *By which (Spirit) also he went and preached, (going he preached, that is, He preached, which is the thing intended, without any regard to local Motion,) unto the Spirits in Prison*: Where allowing that *Spirits in Prison* mean Spirits in *Hades*, yet this Notion of Christ's preaching

* See N^o LXXXIII.

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preaching to them there does not follow from this Text. *He preached*, says St. Peter, *to the Spirits that were in Prison*, that is, in *Hades*; but he says not a Syllable that this preaching to them was after they came into that Place. They were when he wrote his Epistle, and they are still, in *Hades*; but the Time of Christ's preaching to them *by the Spirit*, was evidently in the Days of their Flesh; even then when they were disobedient, when once the Long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing. Noah was a Preacher of Righteousness to that Generation, and their rejecting his Admonitions, being a resisting of the Holy Ghost, was the great Aggravation of their Disobedience. It is impertinent in Mr. Whiston to talk, as from this Text, about Christ's preaching in *Hades* "*to the old pious Patriarchs*;" because if the Text had any relation to preaching in *Hades*, it says not that this preaching was *to the old pious Patriarchs before the Flood*, but to the old impious Rebels that perished in it; that *Κόσμος ἀσεβῶν*, as St. Peter calls them, 2. Ch. ii. 5. who had so corrupted their Ways, and filled the Earth with such Violence, that nothing could cleanse and restore it but an universal Deluge. And though they were so wicked, that it repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth, yet his Long-suffering waited in the Days of Noah a hundred Years or more, (see * Gen. vi. 3.) before he destroy'd them.

* See Saurin, Patrick, *Biblioth. Biblica*, in loc. And *Revelation examin'd with Candour*, Vol. 1. Dissertat. ix.

them. And what good Reason then is there to imagine, that Christ should preach in *Hades* to such Sinners as these?

IF this Text does not contain the Doctrine of preaching in *Hades*, there is hardly any Shadow of Pretence left that the other does, viz. Ch. iv. 6. *For this Cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to Men in the Flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.* That is, says Mr. *Whiston*, p. 44. “ Though “ these old Sinners were condemn’d to be “ drown’d in the Flood, as to their Bodies, “ for their Crimes; yet might they, by this “ Preaching in *Hades*, be brought afterward “ to eternal Life, in their spiritual Part, or “ Souls.” Here, we see, he makes the former Text the Key to the Meaning of this: For otherwise this Text says not a Word about the *Flood*, or *the old Sinners* that were *drowned* in it, or any thing to that purpose. Consequently here are two things implied, 1. That the former Text relates to preaching in *Hades*; 2. That the Text in debate must be interpreted by it, and means the same. Neither of which Mr. *W.* has proved, and we are under no Obligation to take for granted. It is evident that the former Text has nothing to do with preaching in *Hades*; but if it had, why must this last Text, in another Chapter, and upon another Subject, mean the same thing? It is own’d that the Text is very obscure; and the
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Sentiments of Commentators upon it are so various, that I shall not pretend to recite them. If *the Dead* here are only the * metaphorical Dead, Men *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, which at least is possible, the Dispute is at an end. If they are *the Dead* in a literal Sense, it does not follow, nor does St. Peter say, that the Gospel was preach'd to them *after* they were dead. There is a like Form of Expression in *Ruth* ii. 20. *Blessed be he (viz. Boaz,) who hath not left off his Kindness to the Living and to the Dead*: that is, has continued to be kind to the Relicts of *Elimelech* and his Son, as he had been to them when they were alive: [*Patrick in loc.*] The latter part of the *Verse* in St. Peter shews, that, whether they were dead or not at the time of his writing, they were alive when the Gospel was preach'd to them. For it was preach'd to them *for this Cause*, ἵνα κερθῶσι μὲν κατὰ ἀνθρώπους σαρκί, ζῶσι δὲ κατὰ Θεὸν πνεύματι; *That they might be judged, &c.* If the Words be taken *actively*, in some such sense as this †, *that they might condemn, might strive against, might mortify* those sensual Lusts and Appetites which they had indulged *in Time past*, when they *wrought the Will of the Gentiles*, &c. y. 2. which is living *according to*, or after the manner of,
Men

* A Metaphor not unfrequent in Scripture, as every one knows. *Let the Dead bury their Dead*: *Matth.* viii. 22. *She that liveth in Pleasure is dead*: *1 Tim.* v. 6. See *Eph.* ii. 1. *Col.* ii. 13. and more Instances in almost any Commentator.

† See *Whitby's* Note on the Place.

Men in the Flesh, i. e. carnal Men; then it is plain the Gospel must be preach'd to them in their Life-time. For it was preach'd to them for this reason, that they might reform their former vitious Life, and lead a new and spiritual Life, *living according to God in the Spirit*. If the *Verb* κερτασι be taken *passively*, it may denote the Judgment either of this World, or the Judgment of God. In the former way the Sense may be to this Effect; *For this Cause the Gospel was preached to them, that they might, or tho' they might be, or were, judged or condemn'd indeed in the Flesh, according to Men*, i. e. put to death by the Judgment of Men, as to the Body *, they might nevertheless *live to God in the Spirit*, being made Partakers of eternal Life. Or, the *Judgment* here intended may be God's, in some such sense as the following, *viz. For this Cause was the Gospel preach'd to them that are dead, (i. e. either spiritually dead, or literally so, at the time of St. Peter's writing,) that they might be condemn'd who live according to Men in the Flesh* †, (who indulge their fleshly Lufts

* *Le Clerc*, Supplement to *Hammond*.

† Subaudiendum οἱ, ante κατὰ ἀνθρώπους, & ante κατὰ Θεόν, Elleipsi admodum familiari, de qua vide *Animad.* 1 Cor. ii. 2. *Ad hoc enim* & mortuis prædicatum est sive evangelizatum, ut damnarentur qui erant secundum homines in Carne, vivant autem qui erant secundum Deum in Spiritu; i. e. ut damnarentur qui incedebant vel vivebant ἐν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις, &c. in Cupiditatibus hominum; salventur verò qui vivebant ἐν θελήματι Θεοῦ, in voluntate Dei, ut est 1. 2. Phrasis est omnino eadem apud Paulum, Rom. viii. 5.

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Lusts in opposition to the Light of the Gospel, and tho' they know the Judgment of God denounced against those who commit such things, which renders their Continuance in them quite *inexcusable*: *For this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, &c. John iii. 19.) but that they might live* (in a happy Immortality) who walk *according to God in the Spirit*; who are *spiritually minded*, and lead a holy Life. There are several other Interpretations of this difficult Text: which Consideration alone may serve to shew how unfit it is to prove any Doctrine, which is not agreeable to the Tenour of Scripture, or contain'd in some plain Passages thereof.

THE Point before us is certainly not asserted in any one plain Text; and that it is not agreeable to the general Doctrine and Tenour of Scripture, is evident. For that uniformly teaches us that this World is our State of Trial, and the present Life the Time in which we are to *work out our Salvation*, without giving us any Hopes, that if we neglect it, we may retrieve things in *Hades*. There are several Passages in the Old Testament, which are inconsistent with any Expectations of this kind.—*In Death there is no Remembrance of thee; in the Grave who shall give thee Thanks?*
Or,

Οἱ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ὄντες, τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς Φρονοῦσιν· οἱ δὲ κατὰ πνεῦμα, τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος. *Qui enim sunt secundum Carnem quæ Carnis sunt sapiunt, qui verò sunt secundum Spiritum, ea quæ sunt Spiritus.* Sir Norton Knatchbull in l^os.

Or, make Confession unto thee *. — *The Dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence †. — For the Grave cannot praise thee, Death cannot celebrate thee ; they that go down to the Pit cannot hope for thy Truth ‡. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day ; the Fathers to the Children shall make known thy Truth.* The meaning of which Passages, and many more to the same purpose, is not, as the Sadducees collected from them, that the Soul dies with the Body, and that there is no future State at all ; but the Meaning of them is to the same purpose, with *that* of our Lord, (*John ix. 4.*) *The Night cometh, when no Man can work :* The same with *this* of Solomon, (*Eccles. ix. 10.*) *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave whither thou goest.* And again, *Ch. xi. 3.* *If the Tree fall toward the South, or toward the North ; in the place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be :* [See N^o XLV.] And

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with

* Psal. vi. 5. Τί γὰρ οἶδας ἄνθρωπε ἁμαρτήσας, εἰ ἡμέρας ζήσεις ἐν τῷδε τῷ βίῳ, ἵνα καὶ μετανοήσῃς ; ὅτι ἄθνηλος ἡ ἐξοδός σου ἐκ τοῦ βίου ὑπάρχει, καὶ ἐν ἁμαρτίᾳ τελευτήσαντι μετάνοια οὐκ ἔσται· ὡς λέγει διὰ τοῦ Δαβίδ. Ἐν δὲ τῷ ᾄδῃ τίς ἐξομολογήσεταιί σοι ; *Constit. Apost. Lib. ii. Ch. xiii.* Confer *Menasseh Ben-Israel De Resurrect. Mort. Lib. i. Ch. xiv.*

† Psal. cxv. 17.

‡ *Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19.* Idem dicit quod nos ante diximus. Hunc scilicet mundum esse, in quo virtus & vitium locum habent : In altero vero tantum operum Remunerationem locum habere. *Menasseh Ben-Israel, ubi sup.*

with these Testimonies of the Old Testament the whole Tenour of the *New* agrees ; which every where plainly supposes, that there is no Alteration of our moral State, as to the Nature and Kind of it, between Death and the Day of Judgment. When the Dead are raised, and appear at the great Tribunal *, the Enquiry is what they have done in this World, *that every one may receive the things done in his Body* : 2 Cor. v. 10. *It is appointed unto Men once to die, but after this the Judgment* ; Heb. ix. 27. No reckoning, we see, is at all made of the *Middle State* ; but it is pass'd over as if it really were, what it is sometimes call'd and compar'd to, a State of Sleep ; or as if no such Period had intervened between the Day of each Man's Death, and the Day of the general Judgment. All which is utterly unaccountable, considering how vastly longer that Period is to the greatest Part of Mankind, than the Term of human Life, if *that* also like the present be a State of moral Agency, in which Men may alter the Temper and Habits which they contracted in this World, and with which they left it †. There is as little Probability

* See Matt. xxv.

† Quod si alia interveniat vita ante Judicium ; eaque talis, ut bene aut male agendi, virtutis & vitii, æquè capax sit ac hodierna, eaque multo longior sit & diuturnior : nullam video rationem, cur ab hodierna vita sola, breviuscula, incommoda, & innumeris tentationibus obnoxia, pendeat totum pondus æternitatis, vel fortis futuræ ; alterâ illâ, multo majoris momenti, neglecta penitus, vel pro nihilo habita. *Burnet De Stat. Mort. p. 98.*

See also *Sherlock on Death*, Sect. vii. *That Death translates us to an unchangeable State.*

Probability of Reason as Proof from Scripture for this Imagination. The very Nature of the separate State is ill suited to it. For new Habits must be acquir'd by Exercise, and a Repetition of the same Acts; and virtuous Habits must proceed from free Choice. But what Scope or Opportunity will there be in *Hades* for the Acts and Exercise of several Virtues? For Justice, Charity, Temperance, and many more? They will be restrain'd from committing the Acts indeed of Intemperance, and other Vices, by the very Nature of their Condition. But what Morality is there in this? Where is the Virtue that proceeds from free Choice?

BUT the Deficiency in the Nature of the separate State in this respect, may perhaps be supplied by Advantages of another kind; and what it wants in Virtue, may be compensated by Punishment. For "the Fire or Flame of "*Gehenna* extends into such parts of *Hades* as "wicked Men, who are not incurably so, are "forced into, long before the Day of Judgment." And "this preliminary Eruption of "that Fire or Flame is intended as a Punishment necessary for the Repentance and Recovery of lesser Offenders*." Of which Expedients I need only say, that if the *Hypothesis* of Repentance in *Hades* be so weak as to totter with its own Weight, it is not likely to support this additional Heap of Absurdities with which Mr. *Whiston* has loaded it. It is hard to

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say,

* Mr. *Whiston's* Discourse, p. 115.

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say, how this material Fire can affect immaterial Substance †: Or, if it could, how it is calculated to produce real Virtue. All Punishment, it is certain, has not this Effect; for then *that of Gehenna* would not terminate, as Mr. W. supposes, in Annihilation.

BUT want of Proof, or Probability, is not the worst Circumstance in this Affair. It has an ill Aspect on practical Religion; and may for that reason be justly suspected to be no part of that Gospel, which contains only *the Doctrine which is according to Godliness*. The great Argument for *working out our Salvation* in the present Life, *while it is called to-day*, is, *because the Night cometh, when no Man can work*. But if Men are once taught to believe that there will be *another Day*, that will answer their purpose

† If it should be said, that the Soul is not immaterial, it should be remember'd on the other hand, that the Contrary has been prov'd by several excellent Writers, Dr. Clarke, the Author of the *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, &c. The only Refuge then I conceive must be in some *material Vehicle*, or *aërial Body*: And *this* an Author I have been concerned with before says, *is demonstrable from Philosophy and Apparitions*. [Letter, &c. concerning Origen, p. 65.] But as he has not explain'd his Argument from Philosophy, and as the other from Apparitions is too slippery to build any thing upon, I may dismiss this Doctrine of *Vehicles* with the Censure of Mr. Locke; “Should *aërial* and *ætherial Vehicles* come once, by the
“Prevalency of that Doctrine, to be generally received
“any where, no doubt those Terms would make Impressions on Men's Minds, so as to establish them in the
“Persuasion of the Reality of such things, as much as
“*Peripatetick Forms* and *Intentional Species* have heretofore done.” *Essay*, vol. 2. p. 96. 8vo.

pose as well ; it is natural to think, that they will be too apt to trust to that Resource, and so live and die without Repentance. I don't say that this Conduct would be reasonable, but that it is likely to be Fact, considering how strongly Men are attach'd to their old and favourite Sins. It is from a Sentiment of this kind that Bishop *Bull** expresses himself with so much warmth, with regard to the *Popish* Doctrine of *Purgatory* ; which he calls " a gross Imposition, that hath been, he is persuaded, the
 " eternal Ruin of thousands of Souls, for whom
 " our Blessed Lord shed his most precious Blood,
 " who might have escaped Hell, if they had
 " not trusted to a Purgatory." This makes a material Difference between Mr. *W*—'s Doctrine, and *that* of some of the early Writers of the Church. Their Opinion, though groundless perhaps, was however harmless ; was matter of Speculation, which had no ill Influence on Christian Morality, nor was of ill Consequence to the Souls of Men. For what if Christ, or his Apostles, preach'd in *Hades* to the old pious Patriarchs †,---or to all the holy Men of old, who in their respective Ages believed in a Messiah *to come*, ---or even to the good Men in

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the

* English Works, Vol. I. p. 115.

† See *Cyrl. Hieros. Edit. Mills.* p. 53. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* vi. p. 762. Cum Not. Reverendissimi : And *Cotelerius, Not. in Herm. Past.* Lib. iii. Sim. ix. Quinetiam ad omnes solosque eos ex mortuis pertinuisse prædicationem & salutem, qui dum viverent, crediderant in Christum venturum, virtutisque operam navaverant, Doctrina quoque est multorum.

the Heathen World, who had cultivated the Principles of Virtue;—what is this to the Case of Christians? Don't the same Writers declare, as plainly as a few Words can declare, that with regard to *these last* there is no Repentance in *Hades*? When Mr. *W.* meets with such Declarations as these, he tells us that he is *obliged to understand* them with respect only to *great and enormous Sins; such as prevented the Hopes of Amendment in Hades, &c.* p. 62. But howsoever he may be obliged to understand them, to make them consistent with his own *Hypothesis*, they are easy enough to be understood in themselves, in a sense perfectly consistent with that other Opinion concerning the Gospel's being preach'd in *Hades*, to those who had lived in the Ages before it.

C H A P. VI.

The Use and Importance of the Doctrine defended above.

AS nothing will excuse the Prolixity with which I have treated this Subject, but the *Moment* of it, I think myself concern'd to shew that this is an Article of some Weight ; and not a Point of small, or ill, Consequence, as some affect to represent it *. Mr. *Whiston*, for instance, tells us, p. 102. that “ This proper “ *Eternity of Hell-torments*, is no fundamental Doctrine of Christianity.” His Reason is, because it is “ intirely omitted in all the five original Catalogues that we have of those *fundamental Doctrines*.” Where, supposing the *Report* to be true, the *Argument* is inconclusive. For though he is pleas'd to dignify them with the Name of *Catalogues of fundamental Doctrines*, every one who looks into them

* It is not easy to tell what Mr. *W.* distinctly means. If the Eternity of Punishment be no Doctrine of Christianity at all, as the whole Purpose of his Book is to prove, there is no Occasion to shew that it is no *fundamental* Doctrine. But if his Meaning be, that supposing it true, it is still not *important* Doctrine, it seems to contradict what he says, p. 104 ; where his Argument plainly implies that if it were true, it would be a “ *most important Article*.” And therefore he argues against the *Truth* of it, because *This most important Article* is so hastily pass'd over by the Apostles ; that is, his pretended Apostles in the *Constitutions*. Here the *Importance* of it seems to be plainly acknowledged.

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them will be satisfied that they are no such thing. *Creeds* were never design'd for compleat Catalogues of Fundamentals *; and the original and oldest *Creeds* are least of all so, being generally the shortest. As Heresies sprung up in After-Ages, *Creeds* became larger and more explicite, to be a Guard and Security to the Faith. Several Articles *omitted* might be of equal Importance, but as they were not equally opposed and deny'd, there was not the same Necessity to insert them in those short *Summaries* of Faith. It is therefore no just Inference, that because an Article is omitted in the oldest *Creeds*, it is consequently not fundamental.

BUT how after all, and in what sense, is the Point in question *omitted* in the *Creeds* or Catalogues mention'd? No otherwise than the Perpetuity of the Joys of Heaven is omitted; that is, neither of them is express'd particularly, but such general Terms are used as, when explain'd according to Scripture, imply both. *The Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust, The Judgment, and the Retribution*; — must in all reason be understood agreeably to Scripture-Ideas; and then they will comprehend the Resurrection unto Life, and the Resurrection of Damnation, *John* v. 29. *Judgment* unto Justification, and *Judgment* to Condemnation, and the Retribution
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* See Dr. *Waterland's* Lecture-Sermons, p. 321, &c. Remarks upon Dr. *Clarke's* Exposition, p. 73, &c. Importance, &c. p. 244. Critical History of the *Athanasian Creed*, p. 285. Discourse of Fundamentals, p. 40.

consequent thereon, when the Wicked shall go into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal; Matt. xxv. 46. It is however of no great Consequence, and hardly worth disputing, whether these *Constitution-Creeds* contain our Doctrine, or not. For tho' Mr. *W.* reckons them of *most sacred*, they are evidently of very *uncertain* Authority, which is next to none. There are plain Marks of their being later than the Age they pretend to, even in the very Chapters referr'd to by Mr. *W.* by their opposing Heresies which did not rise till afterwards, and using Phrases unknown to the Apostolical Age *. But so far as their Authority is of any weight, they cast it all in the present case into the right Scale. For they decree positively for the natural Immortality of the Soul, and they declare that there are some impious Wretches who will never be forgiven, neither in this Wold, nor in the World to come †. And what the just and natural Consequence is of these things laid together, I leave any unprejudiced Man to judge.

“ THE last and most imperfect Catalogue, “ Mr. *W.* says, is in the Epistle to the *Hebreus* ;” viz. Ch. vi. 1, 2. To which I answer, first, that it is no Catalogue of Fundamentals at all ‡; but

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* Vid. *Constitut.* Lib. vi. Cap. 11. & Lib. vii. C. 41. Cum Not. *Cotelerii* & *Clerici* in loc.

† With the Passages just referr'd to, compare the following, Lib. vi. Cap. 10. Lib. i. C. 6. Lib. v. C. 6. Lib. vi. 18, & 26. Lib. vii. C. 32.

‡ See this prov'd in Dr. *Waterland's* Discourse concerning Fundamentals, p. 43, &c.

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a short Summary of the *Elementary* Doctrines, the first Principles as it were of Christian Knowledge, without which they could hardly be so much as *Babes* in Christ. In the next place I assert that this Catalogue, perfect or imperfect, contains the Doctrine in dispute; for *ἡ ἀίω- νιον*, and *ἡ αἰώνιος*, never signify any else in the New Testament. I return him therefore his Argument, and observe that this must be an Article of some Importance, since it is found in so short a Summary even of *the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*. What Mr. *W.* next relates is of no great Consequence, supposing it all just, *viz.* that *Creeds*, (so I understand him to mean) *generally omit the direct mention of the Punishment of the Wicked on purpose; as of small Consequence, in comparison of the Article of the Happiness of the Good*. Another Writer likewise observes, “We every day repeat “in our Creed, *I believe in Life everlasting*. The “Compilers certainly forgot to add, *I believe in “Death everlasting*. This Omission may, at least, “convince us, that they did not look on that “Article, as an essential Point*.” Here, not to mention that some Creeds of very great Antiquity, such as those of *Irenæus*, as is allow’d by Mr. *W.* himself, do enlarge on this Article; I maintain that the Argument is of no weight. For the Creeds which omit it, do not omit it for this reason, because it is *of small Consequence*, or because the Compilers look’d on it as no *essential Point*; but upon other accounts, and principally

* Letters concerning the State of Souls, &c. p. 384. in *Not.*

principally perhaps because it is sufficiently implied in what is express'd, viz. *The Retribution, the Life of the World to come, or the Life everlasting*. I am sensible Mr. W. will not admit of this, for he blames Bishop Pearson, and some others of our modern Comments for including this Punishment in the Article. I know not what Comments he means, but I will take the liberty to cite the Words of two, which overthrow all he suggests to the contrary. "The Resurrection
 " of the Dead, is in order to that final Judgment, which shall pass upon all Mankind
 " as soon as they are raised. The Effect of this
 " Judgment, will be the separating of Men according to their Deserts, and appointing them
 " their different Portions in that eternal State,
 " which shall succeed the Dissolution of this
 " present World. Which eternal State is, in the present Article, styled *the Life everlasting*;
 " from that more excellent part of it, which is the State of *Happiness* for the Righteous.
 " But it includes also, by necessary Consequence, that State of *Punishment* or *Misery*, into
 " which the Wicked shall be sent at the Great Day." Dr. Clarke's *Exposition of the Catechism*, p. 140. The other Person is the late Lord Chancellor King, who concludes his *Critical History of the Apostles Creed* as follows:—
 " The Gnosticks, as it hath been already related
 " in the fifth Chapter of this Treatise, unto which I refer the Reader, divided all Mankind into three Parts, Earthly, Animal, and
 " Spiritual; the first of which, and part of the
 " second,

“ second, they affirmed, would be annihilated,
 “ or reduced to nothing by the general Confla-
 “ gration at the Last Day, whilst only the Spi-
 “ ritual, and part of the Animal, should be
 “ made immortal and eternal. To obviate
 “ which Opinion, as it seems most probable,
 “ the Rulers of the Church did in those days,
 “ subjoin to the *Resurrection* the Clause of *Life*
 “ *Everlasting*, that thereby that Heresy might
 “ be contradicted and warded against: From
 “ whence we find, that *Irenæus* a Cotemporary
 “ with these Hereticks, and their greatest An-
 “ tagonist and Confuter, doth in opposition to
 “ their Heresy, thus paraphrastically express in
 “ his Creed the final Determination of every
 “ Man, that after the Resurrection Christ shall
 “ render a righteous Judgment unto all; *wicked,*
 “ *unjust, ungodly and blasphemous Men, he shall*
 “ *send into everlasting Fire; but, unto the Just*
 “ *and Righteous, and those who kept his Com-*
 “ *mandments, he shall give Immortality, and*
 “ *eternal Glory.* And in another of his Creeds,
 “ he thus words it, That Christ *shall come*
 “ *in Glory to be a Saviour of those who are*
 “ *saved, and a Judge of those who are judged,*
 “ *sending the Corrupters of his Truth, and the*
 “ *Contemners of his Father, and his Coming,*
 “ *into eternal Fire.* And to the same Effect, it
 “ is in a Creed of *Tertullian's*, which he designed-
 “ ly repeats in opposition to the *Gnosticks*,
 “ and other Hereticks of his Time, That Christ
 “ shall come in *Glory to receive the Saints into*
 “ *the Fruit of eternal Life, and to sentence the*
 “ *Prophane*

“ *Prophane to everlasting Fire.* From all
 “ which it appears, that this Clause was levelled
 “ against the foremention’d Heresy of the *Gno-*
 “ *sticks* ; and, that it includes the final and eter-
 “ nal State of every Man, of the Damned in
 “ Hell, as well as of the Blessed in Heaven ; that
 “ on the one hand, the Wicked and Miserable
 “ shall for ever suffer under the Loads of Divine
 “ Vengeance ; and that on the other hand, the
 “ Godly and Blessed shall forever live in the per-
 “ petual Fruition of pure and undisturbed Happi-
 “ ness : The Eternity of both which Persons and
 “ States, are included by St. *Austin* in his Ex-
 “ plication of this Article, That after the Resur-
 “ rection and universal Judgment, *the Godly*
 “ *shall happily live in eternal Life, but the*
 “ *Wicked miserably, without the Power of dying,*
 “ *in eternal Death, because they shall both be*
 “ *without End.* Wherewith agrees the Creed,
 “ commonly called the Creed of St. *Athanasius*,
 “ That at Christ’s Coming, all Men shall rise
 “ again with their Bodies, and shall give account
 “ for their own Works ; *and they that have*
 “ *done Good, shall go into Life everlasting ; and*
 “ *they that have done Evil, into everlasting*
 “ *Fire.*”

BUT this Point must not be decided merely
 by the Authority of Creeds. If they had not
 contain’d it so expressly as some of them do, yet
 still if it be Scripture-Doctrine, if it be in-
 sisted upon, repeated, inculcated in the Word
 of God, it must be a Doctrine of great Impor-

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tance. For, besides that it is not reasonable to think that Scripture should frequently inculcate Points of little weight, or use, This is a Doctrine of such a particular nature, that if it be a Truth at all, it must be a Truth of moment. It is indeed no less than this, that Men may incur a miserable Eternity by their Behaviour here. And surely This can never be consider'd as a matter of small Consequence, in which Men are very little concern'd. How plainly this Doctrine is taught in Scripture, and how frequently repeated there, may be collected from the former part of this Work.

WE may examine this matter in another light. The *Sanctions* of the Christian Covenant, which bind it, and give it its due Weight and Efficacy, must be look'd upon as *essential* to the Covenant. “ Accordingly, the Doctrine of
 “ a *Future State*, must be a fundamental Doctrine, as it is the Principle of all Religion:
 “ For without it there can be no sufficient Inducement to the *constant* and *conscientious*
 “ Practice of Virtue and Piety. The Doctrine
 “ also of a *Resurrection*, and final *Judgment* by
 “ Christ our Lord, together with the Doctrines
 “ of a *Heaven* for the Righteous, and a *Hell*
 “ for the Ungodly, are *Fundamental* Points of
 “ Christian Theology. To deny or disbelieve
 “ these Doctrines, is to overturn the *Covenant*,
 “ because it directly tends to defeat and frustrate
 “ the *End* and *Use* of it, undermining its binding
 “ Force, and sapping its Influences, depriving
 “ it

“ it of its Life, Strength and Energy *.” The only Reply to this worth mentioning, must be I conceive to the following purpose: That the Doctrine of a future State of Retribution is one thing, and *that* of eternal Punishment another; and that however fundamental the general Doctrine may be, yet this Circumstance of the Perpetuity, this particular Explication of the Article, is so far from being fundamental, that it is rather a Point of small Consequence.

THE Light in which we are now viewing this Doctrine, is its Influence on Practice. And it should seem that it is the Eternity of the Punishment, which gives it its chief Weight and Edge, and makes it pierce deepest into the Hearts of Sinners. It is the Notion that *That* miserable State will admit of neither Remedy, or End, that alarms their Fears, that restrains their Wickedness within some bounds, and is most likely after all to make them repent of it. It seems natural to think that it must be so in Reason, and it evidently appears to be so in Fact. Don't we see with what Eagerness licentious Men of every kind embrace the *Hypothesis* of temporary Punishments? What can be the Reason of this, but that they find Ease and Relief in this Persuasion? They are resolved not to leave their Sins, and the greatest Consolation their Case will admit of, is to believe as firmly as they can, that they shall not suffer eternally for them. The general Doctrine of a Future State gives
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them

* *Waterland* of Fundamentals, p. 23.

them no great Disturbance, and therefore they are content for the most part to let that alone. But inculcate once the Eternity of Hell-torments, and *the World of the Ungodly*, the whole Confederacy of the Wicked is up in Arms: A plain Indication where the Matter pinches, and that it is this Particular which renders them unable to enjoy Ease of Mind, and the Pleasures of Vice together.

WHAT these Men prove by their Practice, our Adversaries themselves, some of them, confirm by their Judgment. They seem to be sensible that their Doctrine may be of ill Consequence; and are therefore for having it kept as a sort of *Secret* from the Generality of Mankind, many of whom are hardly restrained by the Fear even of eternal Punishment, from running into all manner of Vice. This appears from the Quotation below to have been the Sentiment of *Origen* *; and that it was so also of Dr.

* — 'Αλλ' ἐδ' ἀκίνδυνον τὴν τῶν τοιούτων σαφὴν εἶναι πιστεῦσαι γραφῇ· ἅτε τῶν πολλῶν ἔ' χρηζόντων πλείονος διδασκαλίας παρὰ τὴν περὶ τῆς τῶν ἁμαρτανόντων κολάσεως· εἰς γὰρ τὰ ὑπερέκεινα αὐτῆς ἔ' χρήσιμον ἀναβαίνειν, διὰ τὰς μόγας φόβῳ τῆς αἰωνίας κολάσεως καὶ συσέλλοντας ἐπὶ ποσὸν τῆς κακίας, καὶ τῶν ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἁμαρτανομένων, χύσιν. *Origen. cont. Cels. Lib. vi. p. 292. Ed. Spencer.*

— Veruntamen meminisse semper debemus, quod præsentem locum Apostolus quasi *Mysterium* habere voluit; quo scilicet hujusmodi sensus fideles quique et perfecti intra semetipsos velut *Mysterium Dei* silentio tegant, nec passim imperfectis et minus capacibus proferant. *Orig. in Fine Libri Octavi Explanationum in Epist. ad Romanos. Vide Spenceri Not. ubi sup.*

Dr. Burnet †, is evident, (not to mention other things,) from the express *Caveat* he enters against the *Translation* of his Book. Mr. *Whiston* however is of another Opinion. Tho', by denying the Perpetuity both of Reward and Punishment, he has done more perhaps than any Man living, to destroy the Comfort of good Men, and hinder the Repentance of the wicked, yet he seems to be satisfied that his Doctrine is likely to have as good Influence, as the contrary. They who will not suffer themselves to be moved by it, he imagines, "will hardly ever be moved" "by the Supposal of this *absolute*, but, to a free" "Reasoner, perfectly *incredible eternal Duration* of that Punishment." (p. 141.) And thus far we agree, that where eternal Punishment is not believed, it is not likely to influence. His *free Reasoners* therefore are out of the question: Unless their free living may serve to shew the natural Tendency of such Principles, and in what they generally end. However, this Point must not be decided merely by Practice. Many who pretend to believe, or at least do not profess to deny, a miserable Eternity, do by no means act agreeably to that Persuasion. Want of Consideration, as well as Want of Faith, may defeat the just Influence which it ought, and otherwise would have upon them. The Question is, which of the two Opinions is best calculated in its own Nature to secure Obedience? A Question, one would think, which can admit of no Dispute. For sure the Duration of

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† De Statu Mort, et Resurgent. Cap. xi. ad finem,

any Punishment is a matter of some weight, The longer this Duration is likely to be, the more is the Punishment to be feared, and avoided ; And consequently, eternal Punishment is more to be feared, than any other Punishment whatsoever. It is for this Reason, we say, that eternal Punishment is threatened in Scripture : None other is so well adapted to secure Obedience to the Divine Laws. And admitting the Premises, which I have proved before, *viz.* that eternal Punishment is threatened, it follows demonstrably from the Wisdom of God, that it is the likeliest Means to answer the End proposed *. This Point of the *Importance* then will rest after all on the Point of the *Truth* ; and if This has been established, we need be in no pain about the former.

THERE is however another Writer, to whom I must pay my Respects once more before I conclude. The *French Letter-writer* is confident that the Doctrine he opposes is so very incredible, that no Man can believe it. “ We only imagine “ we believe it ;” and he “ dares be positive, “ that no Man is really persuaded of it.” In this View it is an easy thing for him to prove, that it is not likely to produce any great Effects. “ Nothing that is over-strained, or seems exaggerated, strikes the Mind. Let a School-
“ master

* Et revera nisi magis abhorruisset Natura humana à summa Misericordia et æterno Cruciatu, quam ab Insensibilitate aut Annihilatione, Deus minatus fuisset improbis Annihilationem, non æternum Cruciatum, atque eo modo homines à vitiis magis deterruisset. *Burnet, ubi sup.*

“ master tell his Scholar that his Father will
 “ hang him if he doth not study ; he laughs at
 “ the Menace : It is too much disproportion’d
 “ both to his own Demerits, and the Idea he
 “ entertains of his Father’s Equity *.” All this
 appears to me to be a way of reasoning very singular and surprizing. Whether God has revealed the Doctrine of eternal Punishment in the Scriptures, and whether Christians do, and ever did, believe it, seem to me to be Enquiries of *Fact*. But this Gentleman proves *à priori* as it were, if he proves any thing, that neither of these can be the Case. For a Being of infinite Wisdom can never propose That, as a Motive of Fear and Obedience, which is so incredible in itself, that no Man can really believe it. Instead therefore of following this Writer in his Reveries and *à priori* Reasonings, it is sufficient to appeal to Scripture for the Determination of one of these Enquiries, and to Fact and Experience for the other. Only I would take notice that his Case of the *School-master* and the *Scholar*, is so far from being a parallel one, or any Illustration at all of the Case in hand, that it comes not up to it in one Circumstance. Put the Case thus ; a Father threatens his Son, that if he will persist in his Course of most obstinate Disobedience and Rebellion, he must, and will, disinherit him ; the Consequence of which will be all imaginable Misery and Distress. Will the Son have any Reason to *laugh at the Menace* ? He may indeed, through Self-flattery and Self-deceit, think it

* Letters, &c. p. 404.

it *too much disproportioned to his own Demerits*; or he may hope, from the Weakness and fond Indulgence of a human Parent, that his Father will be better than his Word. And thus as to the Threats of eternal Misery, Sinners may *deceive themselves*; ——— may entertain too low Thoughts of the Evil, Guilt, and Malignity of Sin in general, or of their own in particular; — or may have some mistaken Notions concerning the Mercy of God. But all this is their own Act, and their own Fault; and does not follow from the Doctrine itself, but is owing to their Abuse or Disbelief of it. And this is Answer enough to what this Writer farther suggests, *viz.* that our Doctrine is of ill Consequence to the Morals of Men. For, says he, “if they are not
 “ professed Highway-men, Traitors, Blaspheme-
 “ mers, &c. they cannot conceive that God will
 “ condemn them to frightful and endless Tor-
 “ ments.” Nay, “not only these Persons flat-
 “ ter themselves with Impunity, but even Sin-
 “ ners of the first Magnitude, Traitors, and the
 “ Perjured, &c. all of them to a Man hope to
 “ escape Hell, either by repenting, as they pro-
 “ pose to do, sooner or later; or through the
 “ infinite Mercy of God, that will get the bet-
 “ ter of Justice, as they speak.” (*p.* 291.) And so truly because Men are *hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin*, because they flatter and impose upon themselves, and disbelieve the Word of God, because *Wickedness alters their Understandings, and Deceit beguiles their Souls*; therefore the Doctrine of eternal Torments is of ill consequence.

consequence. Come then, let us change it at once, and introduce this Author's System of a Purification and Restoration. See the wonderful Effects of this new System! The Highway-men and Traitors, the perjured Persons, and Sinners of the first magnitude, are converted, and become good Christians! But seriously, what reason is there to expect such Effects from such a Cause? May not this Doctrine be abused, and made an Encouragement to continue in Sin; as well as our's? Is it not easy for a Sinner of this Persuasion to delude himself, and think that a small Share of purifying Punishment will serve his Turn; after which he shall be restored to Happiness, and the Favour of God? The Author suggests in another place, (*p. 173.*) that "the Apprenticeship, which they must serve in the other World, will prove harder than it would have been in this." Be it so; yet Men attached to their Vices, would trust the Event. They would willingly believe that it would not be very long, or very severe; and they would enjoy the Pleasures and Profits of Sin during this Life, since they could redeem Matters in the next. In short, our Lord and his Apostles have plainly told us, what sort of Men *shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. If any such Sinners flatter themselves with the Hopes of Impunity, it is only a Proof of the Deceitfulness, or Infidelity, of their own evil Hearts; and the Consequence be to themselves. The Doctrine of everlasting Punishment is not to be blamed for it, which has only This in common with other Truths

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Truths of Religion, that it may be perverted, and made an ill Use of, by particular Men. And if this once be made the Rule of our rejecting them, it is hard to say what we shall be able to retain.

THERE is another thing intimated to shew the ill Consequence of this Doctrine, which is this; that it prejudices Men against the Christian Religion, and hinders them from embracing it. And supposing the Fact, how would the Gentlemen who give us this Intimation, have us behave in the Case? All that can reasonably be done, is to *search the Scriptures*, and examine whether this Doctrine be really contained in them. If it be, we have no warrant either to conceal, or disguise it. We are to take our Religion as we find it in the Bible, and not model a new one for ourselves. Nor would such Conduct, if it were allowable, be prudent. It would neither pass undetected, nor uncensured. The Persons who now pretend that they cannot digest Christianity with this hard Article in it, would be ready to expose any thing that look'd like *handling the Word of God deceitfully*. They would reproach Christians for not understanding, or not believing, the very Charter of their Religion. Your Gospel, would they say, plainly teaches the Eternity of Hell-Torments; a Point which none of you believe, and which your Preachers are ashamed to teach. This would be the Language of Infidelity; and Men inclined that way, would still retain their Prejudices against Christianity.

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IN a word, this Point must be determined by the Merits of the Cause. If the Doctrine here asserted be any real Doctrine of the New Testament at all, it is a Doctrine of considerable Weight, and ought, so far from being concealed or disguised, frequently to be inculcated, and plainly laid before the People *. How can any Minister answer it before God, if any Soul should miscarry through his Silence, or Unfaithfulness, in this great Affair? And what can be more likely to lead Men into this *Place of Torments*, than drawing a Veil over it, and hiding the most dreadful Part of it from their View? *The Terrors of the Lord*, when fairly represented, may *persuade Men*. At least, if they will not, it is difficult to say what else will be effectual to this purpose. With this View I have drawn up this Essay, and this is the best Apology I can make for writing upon the Subject.

* See Mr. *Whiston's* Book, p. 135, &c.

F I N I S.

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